Hulett Sculp.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

BIBLE.

BOOK IV.

Containing an Account of Things, from the ISRAELITES *Departure out of* EGYPT, *to their Entrance into the Land of* CANAAN. *In all forty Years.*

CHAP. I.

From their Departure, to the Building of the Tabernacle.

The HISTORY.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

The Iſraelites *ſet forward from* Rameſes, *and arrive at* Succoth.

WHEN the *Iſraelites* ſet out from *Egypt*, they made *Rameſes*, the chief City of *Goſhen*, the Place of their general *Rendez-vous*; and from thence, on the *fifteenth* Day of the *firſt* Month, they travell'd about ten or twelve Miles, to *Succoth*, where they made a Stop, and review'd their Company, which conſiſted of ſix hundred Thouſand Perſons, beſides Children and Strangers: For Strangers of ſeveral Nations, having ſeen the Wonders, which were wrought for their Deliverance, left *Egypt* at the ſame Time, with a Purpoſe to accompany their Fortunes. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

WHILE the Senſe of their Deliverance, and God's Judgments was freſh in their

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Minds, *Moſes* was commanded to let the People know, that when they came to be ſettled in the Land of *Canaan*, the *Firſt-born*, both of Man and Beaſt, in Remembrance of God's having ſpar'd their *Firſt-born* when he deſtroy'd the *Egyptians*, ſhou'd be ſet a-part, and dedicated to him: And, as *Joſeph*, dying in the Faith of this their Deliverance, had laid an Injunction upon his Brethren, whenever they ſhou'd go from thence, to carry his Bones out of *Egypt*; ſo *Moſes* † took care to have the Coffin, wherein he had lain embalm'd for above an hundred and forty Years, not left behind.

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Are thence guided by the Pillar of a Cloud *(as afterwards all along) to* Etham.

† From *Succoth* their neareſt Way to *Canaan* was certainly through the Country of the *Philiſtines*; but, for fear that a People, unaccuſtom'd to War, ſhou'd, in caſe of any Oppoſition, repent of their Deliverance, and take it into their Heads to return into *Egypt*, God order'd them to take their *Rout* along the Coaſts of the *Red-Sea*; and, for their greater Encouragement and Security, himſelf undertook to guide and direct them, both in their *Marches* and *Encampments*, by the wonderful Appearance of a *Cloud*, in the Form of a large *Column*, which ſhaded them from the Heat of the Sun by Day, and, in the Night-time, became a Pillar of Fire, or a bright Cloud, to ſupply the Sun's Abſence, and illuminate their Camp. By this Means, they were enabled, upon any Occaſion, to march both Day and Night: And, under this auſpicious Guide proceeding from *Succoth*, they came to *Etham*, (which gives Name to the Wilderneſs, on whoſe Borders it is ſituated) and there they encamp'd.

And thence to Pi-hahiroth.

In the mean Time, the † King of *Egypt* had Information brought him, that the

† The *Jews* tell us, that, upon the *Iſraelites* Departure out of *Egypt*, every *Tribe* took care to bring along with them the Bones of the Anceſtor of their Family: But, though they are not always to be credited in Matters of this Nature, and *Joſephus* does not ſeem to have dreamt of any ſuch Act of *filial* Piety, or elſe he wou'd, in all Probability, have recorded it; yet St *Stephen* (Acts vii. 15, 16.) ſeems to allude to ſome ſuch Tradition among them, when he tells us, that *Jacob and the Fathers went down into* Egypt, *and were carry'd over into* Sychem, *and laid in the Sepulchre, which* Abraham *had bought of the Sons of* Emmor. Univerſal Hiſtory, l. 1. c. 7.

† It is ſomewhat difficult to make out the *Geography* of the Places where the *Hebrews* encamp'd, between their parting from *Rameſes*, and their Arrival at the *Red-Sea*; but the Account of thoſe who have wrote upon the Subject, is ——— That though there are two Places nam'd *Rameſes*, which are a little differently *pointed*; yet are they but one and the ſame, or, at the moſt, that they differ only in this, that the one was the *Province*, and the other the *chief City* of it; That *Succoth*, not far from *Rameſes* in the Way to the *Red-Sea*, had its Name from the Tents (for ſo the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies) which the *Iſraelites* pitch'd here, as we find, upon the like Occaſion, another Place, between *Jordan* and the Brook *Jabbock*, ſo named: That *Etham* lay on the Confines of *Egypt* and *Arabia Petræa*, not far from the *Red Sea*, and gave the Denomination to the Wilderneſs adjacent: That *Pi-hahiroth*, which, in our *Engliſh*, and ſome other Tranſlations, is render'd as one proper Name, is by the *Septuagint* made Part of it an Appellative, ſo as to ſignify a *Mouth* (for ſo the Word *Pi* may mean) or narrow Paſſage between two Mountains, lying not far from the *weſtern Coaſt* of the *Red-Sea*: That *Magdol* was probably a *Tower* or *Caſtle* (for the Word carries that Signification in it) upon the Top of one of theſe Mountains, which might give Denomination to the City, which (as *Herodotus* informs us) lay not far diſtant from it; and that *Baal Zephon* was by ſome learned Men thought to be an *Idol* ſet up to keep the Borders of the Country, and to hinder Slaves from making their Eſcape. *Baal* indeed, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, ſignifies *Lord*, and hence the Name is generally apply'd to the *Eaſtern* Idols; and the Word *Zephon* is thought to be deriv'd from the Radix *Zapah*, to *watch* or *ſpy*; and from hence it is conjectur'd, that this *Idol* had its Temple on the Top of ſome adjacent Mountain, and that the ſacred Hiſtorian particularly takes notice of it, to ſhew how unable it was (whatever Opinion the *Egyptians* might have of it) to hinder the *Iſraelites* from going out of *Egypt*. There is but ſmall Certainty however to be gather'd from the *Etymology* of Words; and therefore the Authority of *Euſebius* ſhou'd preponderate with us, who makes it not an *Idol*, but a *Town*, ſtanding upon the *Northern* Point of the *Red-Sea*, where the ancients, eſpecially the *Jews*, think that the *Iſraelites* paſs'd it, and where there ſtands, to this Day, a *Chriſtian* Monaſtery. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries, his *Diſſertation* on the *Paſſage of the Red-Sea*, and *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

† It is not unlikely, that ſome of the *mixt Multitude* (Exod. xii. 38.) which went along with the *Iſraelites*, obſerving this Alteration in their *Rout*, and not being able to perceive the Reaſon of it, might forſake them, and, returning to *Pharaoh*, inform him, that they had loſt their Way, and were *intangl'd* among the Mountains: Or (what is more likely ſome *Spies*, which *Pharaoh* had upon them, ſeeing them leave the Way to *Horeb*, where they deſir'd to go three Days Journey, in order to offer Sacrifices, concluded, that they never intended to return to *Egypt*, but were running quite away, and might therefore bring *Pharaoh* the News thereof (as we may ſuppoſe) upon the 18th Day. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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THE CAMP OF THE ISRAELITES.

WEST.

THE CAMP OF EPHRAIM. 108100.

Tribe of EPHRAIM 40500.	Tribe of MANASSEH 32200.	Tribe of BENJAMIN 35400.

GERSHONITES. 7500.

THE CAMP SOUTH. OF REUBEN. 151450.

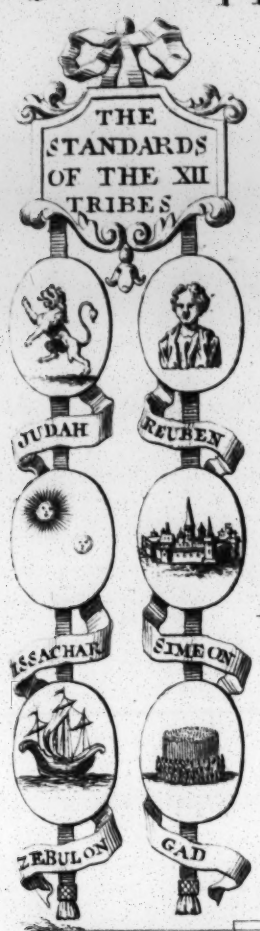
Tribe of GAD 45650.	All the LEVITES 22000.	Tribe of DAN 62700.
Tribe of SIMEON 59300.	KOHATHITES. 8600. The Tabernacle and Camp of GOD 150. MOSES AARON 150. MERARITES. 6200.	Tribe of ASHER 41500.
Tribe of REUBEN 46500.		Tribe of NAPTHALI 53400.

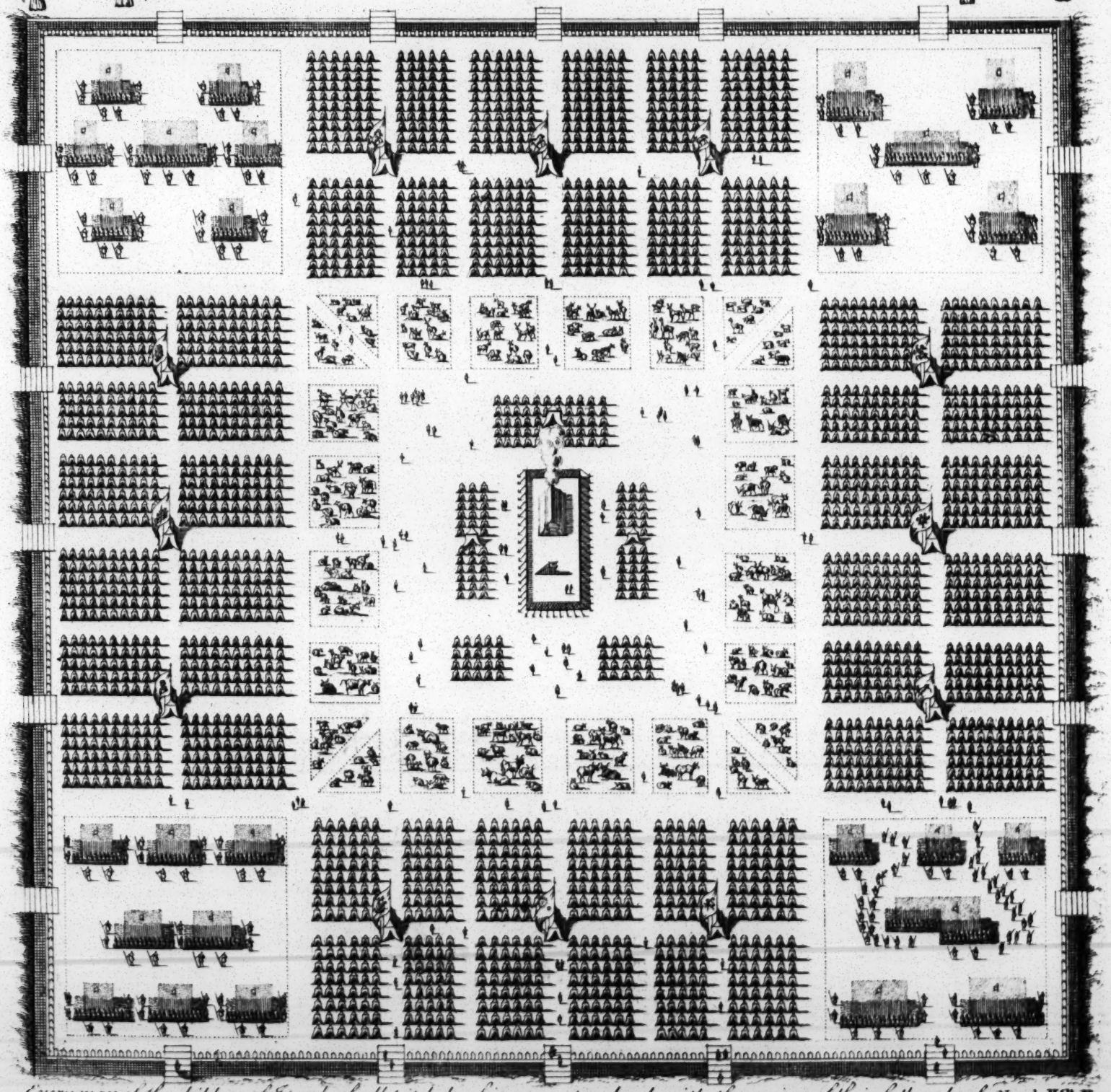
THE CAMP NORTH. OF DAN. 157600.

Tribe of ZEBULON 57400.	Tribe of ISSACHAR 54400.	Tribe of JUDAH 74600.

THE CAMP OF JUDAH. 186400.

EAST.





Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their fathers house. Numb: II. Ch. V. 2.

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A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

the *Iſraelites*, inſtead of returning to his Dominions, were attempting their Eſcape into the *Deſarts* of *Arabia*, by the *Cape* of the *Red-Sea:* And therefore grieving at the Loſs of ſo many uſeful Slaves, and ſuppoſing, that by ſpeedy Marches, he might overtake and recover them, he muſter'd up what Forces he cou'd, and, for the greater Expedition, a conſiderable Quantity of * Chariots and Horſemen, and with theſe * put himſelf upon the Purſuit. But God, who well underſtood what Meaſures were taking in *Pharaoh*'s Court, inſtead of ſuffering the *Iſraelites* to march round the Point of the † *Red-Sea*, as they probably intended, order'd them to advance along the *Coaſts* of it, until they came to *Pi-hahiroth*, which lies between *Migdol* and the Sea, and there to encamp.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

The Egyptians *purſue them.*

BY this Time *Pharaoh* and his Army were come up with them; and, when the *Iſraelites* perceiv'd themſelves hemm'd in on every Side, with the Sea in their *Front*, huge Mountains on their *Flank*, and the *Egyptian* Army in the Rear, they began to deſpair of any Means of Eſcape, and to clamour againſt *Moſes* for having induc'd them to leave *Egypt*, and for bringing them into the Wilderneſs to be ſacrific'd. *Moſes*, however, being appriz'd of God's Deſign, inſtead of * reſenting their Reproaches, endeavour'd to comfort them, by

* *Joſephus*, who loves to magnify Matters, when they tend to the Glory of his Countrymen, as well as conceal what wou'd occaſion their Diſgrace, tells us, that the *Egyptian* Army conſiſted of 600 Chariots, 50,000 Horſe, and 200,000 Foot: But how ſo large a Number cou'd be rais'd in ſo ſhort a Time, or what Need there was of ſo vaſt an *Armament* againſt a weak and defenceleſs People, is hardly conceivable. As therefore we may preſume, that the Haſte, which the *Egyptians* were in leſt the *Iſraelites* ſhou'd get out of the Streights, wherein they were intangl'd, or make their Eſcape ſome other Way, before they came up with them, made them purſue them with *Chariots* and *Horſemen* for the greater Expedition; ſo we may obſerve, that the Chariots, they employ'd in this Purſuit, are call'd *choſen Chariots*, which moſt Interpreters imagine to be ſuch, as were arm'd with *Scythes*, which being drawn with Horſes, and fill'd with Men, who threw Darts and Spears, and other *offenſive* Weapons from them, cou'd not but make a ſtrange Havock wherever they came; and the Number, which the Scripture mentions, under proper *Captains* who might have the Direction of them, was enough to deſtroy all the *Iſraelites*, being worn with hard Bondage, weary'd with Marching, deſtitute of Arms, Strangers to War, and now encamp'd in a very diſadvantageous Situation. *Joſephus*'s Antiquities, l. 2. c. 15. *Ainſworth*'s Annotations, and *Howell*'s Hiſtory.

* "Of all the infatuated Reſolutions (to uſe the Words of the learned Dr *Jackſon*, l. 10. c. 11.) that either "King or People adventur'd on, the purſuing the *Iſraelites* with ſuch a mighty Army, after they had ſo intreated "and urg'd them to leave their Country, may well ſeem, to every indifferent Reader, the moſt ſtupid, that ever was "taken;" And ſo indeed the Author of the *Book of Wiſdom*, Chap. xix. 3. juſtly cenſures it: *For whilſt they were yet mourning*, ſays he, *and making Lamentation at the Graves of the Dead, they added another fooliſh Device, and purſued them, as Fugitives, whom they had intreated to be gone.* But how much ſoever it was, that the *Egyptians* had ſuffer'd for detaining the *Hebrews*; yet, now that they were gone, they poſſibly might be of the ſame Mind with the *Syrians* (1 Kings xx. 23.) who fancy'd, that the God of *Iſrael* might not be alike powerful in all Places; or, if he was, they might nevertheleſs think, that *Moſes*'s Commiſſion extended no farther, than the *Meridian* of *Egypt*: or that if it did, it might however have no Power over mighty *Hoſts* and *Armies*. They knew, at leaſt, that the *Iſraelites*, *as we ſaid*, had no Skill in military Matters, no Captains of *Infantry*, no *Cavalry* at all, no Weapons or Engines of War; whereas they were well furniſh'd and equipp'd with every thing of this Nature: And, upon theſe, and the like Preſumptions, it was, that they became fool-hardy, and deſperately reſolute, either to bring back the *Iſraelites* to their Slavery, or to be reveng'd upon them for all the Loſſes, they had ſuſtain'd, and the Penalties, they had ſuffer'd. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The *Red-Sea*, call'd by the Antients *Sinus Arabicus*, and now *Gulfo de Mecca*, is that Part or Branch of the *Southern* Sea, which interpoſes itſelf between *Egypt* on the *Weſt*; *Arabia-felix*, and ſome Part of *Petræa*, on the *Eaſt*; while the *northern* Bounds of it touch upon *Idumea*, or the Coaſt of *Edom*. *Edom*, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, ſignifies *Red*, and was the Nick-name given *Eſau* for ſelling his *Birth-right for a Meſs of Pottage*. The Country, which his Poſterity poſſeſs'd, was call'd after his Name, and ſo was the Sea, which adjoin'd to it; but the *Greeks*, not underſtanding the Reaſon of the Appellation, tranſlated it into their Tongue, and call'd it Ἐρυθρὰ Θαλάσση; thence the *Latins*, *Mare rubrum*, and we, the *Red-Sea*. The *Hebrews* call it the Sea of *Suph* or *Flags*, by Reaſon of the great Abundance of that Kind of Weed, which grows at the Bottom of it; and the *Arabs*, at this Day, name it *Buhr el Chalzem*, i. e. the *Sea of Cluſona*, from a Town ſituate on its *weſtern* Coaſt, much about the Place, where the *Iſraelites* paſs'd over from the *Egyptian* to the *Arabian* Shore. But, as the Word *Cluſona* may denote a *drowning or overflowing with Water*, it is not improbable that the Town built in this Place, as well as this Part of the Sea, might have ſuch a Name given it, in Memory of the Fate of the *Egyptians*, who were drown'd herein. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

* The Words, which *Moſes* makes himſelf ſpeak upon this critical Occaſion (Exod. xiv. 13, 14) diſcover a wonderful Spirit and Bravery; and it is no bad Comment, which the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian has given us of them. "Put

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by giving them Aſſurance, that God himſelf wou'd certainly *fight for them*, and by his Almighty Power bring Matters to ſuch an Iſſue, that theſe very *Egyptians*, of whom they were ſo much afraid, ſhou'd not one of them live to moleſt them any more.

With theſe comfortable Words, he order'd them to advance towards the Sea-ſide; and, as they were advancing, the miraculous *Cloud* (we were ſpeaking of) remov'd from the *Front* to the *Rear* of the *Iſraelites* Camp, and ſo turning its *dark Side* towards the *Egyptians*, made them uncapable of knowing what they were about; while, by its bright or fiery Side, which it turn'd to the *Iſraelites*, it gave them a Sufficiency of Light, and kept the two Camps from joining that Night.

They paſs the Red Sea, *where the* Egyptians *are all loſt.*

As ſoon as the *Iſraelites* came to the Brink of the Sea, *Moſes* wav'd his ſacred Rod, and immediately a ſtrong *Eaſt-Wind* blew, and drove the Waves back from the Land, and, by dividing the Waters, which ſtood *ſuſpended*, as it were *a Wall* on each Hand, made a dry and ſafe Paſſage for the *Iſraelites*, until they had gain'd the other Shore. The *Egyptians*, in the mean while, never ſuſpecting but that they, with their Chariots and Horſemen, might ſafely follow, where they ſaw the *Iſraelites* go on Foot, enter'd after them into the Midſt of the Sea: But, about Break of Day, they began to ſee their Error, and * their whole Army in the utmoſt Confuſion. Their Chariots were ſome of them broken, others ran into Quick-ſands, and others caſt off their Carriages; ſo that, perceiving the Hand of God againſt them, they were turning about, and offering to flee, but all in vain. As ſoon as the *Iſraelites* were all landed, *Moſes*, by the divine Command, ſtretch'd out his Rod again over the Sea: Whereupon the roaring Waves break looſe from their *inviſible Chain*, and come ruſhing upon *Pharaoh* and his Army, and overwhelm them all; while the *Iſraelites*, beholding, with Wonder and Amazement, the Carcaſſes, and rich Spoils of their Enemies thrown upon the Sea-ſhore, began, at leaſt ſeemingly, to fear God, and to reverence his Servant *Moſes*; who, to celebrate this joyful Deliverance, having compos'd a *triumphant* Hymn, wherein he extols the Greatneſs of God's Power, and his amazing Mercy to his *People* diſplay'd on this Occaſion, divided the Company into two great Choirs; and, ſetting himſelf, and his Brother *Aaron*

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

" the Caſe, *ſays he*, that you had depoſited ſome great Truſt in the Hands of a Perſon, that had hitherto manag'd all " well and wiſely for you, might not you reaſonably depend upon that Man for the ſame Care and Kindneſs, and in " the ſame Caſe too over again? What a Madneſs is it for you to deſpond then, where God himſelf has taken " you under his Protection, and, of his own free Bounty, perform'd every Thing by me, that can contribute to your " Freedom and Security? Nay, the very Difficulty of the Caſe, you are in, is an Argument to inflame your Hope, " rather than diſcourage it. He hath brought you into this Diſtreſs, on Purpoſe to ſhew his Power and Kindneſs " in bringing you out again, even to the Surpriſe and Admiration of yourſelves, as well as your Enemies. It is not " God's Time to interpoſe with his almighty Power in ſmall Matters, but in great and trying Calamities: When all " Hopes of human Help fails us, that is the Seaſon for him to work out the Deliverance of thoſe, who caſt themſelves upon him. And therefore fear Nothing, ſo long as you have him for your Protector and Defender, who is " able to raiſe the Lowly and Oppreſs'd, and to lay the Honour of their Perſecutors in the Duſt. Be not afraid of " the *Egyptian* armed Troops, neither deſpond of your Lives and Safeties, becauſe you are, at preſent, lock'd up " between the Sea and the Mountains, and have no viſible Way in Nature to come off; for the God, whom you " ſerve, is able to level all theſe Mountains, and lay the Ocean dry. His Will, in fine, be done." *Joſephus*'s Antiquities, l. 2. c. 15.

* The Expreſſion in the Text is, that *God troubled the Hoſt of the* Egyptians; and, to enforce the Strength of this Expreſſion, the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian tells us, that, before God let looſe the Waves upon the *Egyptians*, fierce Winds and Tempeſts, Storms of Hail and Rain, terrible Thunderings and Lightnings, and whatever elſe cou'd make their Condition horrible, were ſent down upon them from above; and therefore it is not without good Reaſon, that theſe Words of the *Pſalmiſt* have been apply'd to this Occaſion. *The Waters ſaw thee, O God, the Waters ſaw thee, and were afraid; the Depths alſo were troubled: The Clouds poured out Water, the Air thundered, and thine Arrows went abroad. The Voice of thy Thunder was heard round about, the Lightning ſhone upon the Ground, the Earth was moved, and ſhook withal. Thy Way is in the Sea, and thy Paths, in the great Waters, and thy Footſteps are not known:* Whereupon it follows, *thou leadeſt thy People like Sheep, by the Hand of* Moſes *and* Aaron. *Joſephus*'s Antiquities, l. 2. and Pſal. lxxvii. 16, &c.

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Aaron at the Head of the Men, and his Siſter *Miriam*, with a Timbrel in her Hand, at the Head of the Women, they ſung and play'd *alternately*, and, in the Height of their Joy, intermixed *Dances*.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

The Water at Marah *made ſweet for them.*

BUT, notwithſtanding all theſe thankful Acknowledgments of God's Goodneſs, ſcarce had the *Iſraelites* travell'd three Days from the *Red-Sea* into the Wilderneſs of *Shur*, before their exceſſive Thirſt, and Want of Water, put them out of all Patience: And when, in a ſhort Time, they met with *ſome* (at a Place, which is call'd *Marah)* it prov'd ſo * bitter, that they cou'd not drink it: This Diſappointment inflam'd their Thirſt, and exaſperated their Murmurings againſt *Moſes*, 'till, by the divine Direction, he made uſe of the Wood of a certain Tree, which, as ſoon as it was thrown into the Water, chang'd its offenſive Quality, and made it ſweet.

And Manna *given them from* Heaven.

FROM *Marah* they went, and encamp'd at † *Elim*, where there were twelve Wells of Water, and a good Quantity of *Palm*, or *Date-Trees*, and here they continu'd for ſome Time. From hence they remov'd towards the Wilderneſs of *Sin*; but before they enter'd it, the ſuppos'd Scarceneſs of Proviſions made them begin to diſtruſt God, and to repent, from their very Hearts, that they had ſuffer'd themſelves to be decoy'd from the Plenty, they enjoy'd in the Land of *Egypt*, into a barren, wild *Waſte*, where they cou'd have no other Proſpect, but to die with Hunger: And therefore, to convince theſe murmuring People of his Almighty Power and Providence, God was pleas'd to inform them, that he wou'd take Care to ſupply them with Food from Heaven, which accordingly came to paſs. For, that very Evening, he caus'd † *Quails* to fall among them in ſuch great Quantities, as quite cover'd their Camp; and, on the next Morning, as ſoon as the Dew was gone, there lay, upon the Ground, a little white round Thing, much in the Shape of a *Coriander-Seed*, which when the People ſaw

* The Word *Marah*, in the *Hebrew* Language, ſignifies *Bitterneſs*; and it was from the Taſte of the Waters, that the Place receiv'd its Name. That there are ſeveral Fountains of bitter Water not far from the *Red Sea*, at ſome ſmall Diſtance from the City *Arſinoë*, is atteſted by *Strabo*, *Diodorus*, and moſt modern Travellers, but then the Queſtion is, whether it was by the miraculous Power of God, or by the natural Virtue of the Wood, to which *Moſes* was directed, that theſe bitter Waters were at this Time made *ſweet?* The Author of that excellent Book, call'd *Eccleſiaſticus*, ſeems to be of the latter Opinion: For, having treated of the Honour and Eſteem due to a *Phyſician*, he adds, *the Lord has created Medicines out of the Earth, and he, that is wiſe, will not abhor them. Was not the Water made ſweet with Wood, that the Virtue thereof might be known?* Eccleſ. xxxviii. 5. But, notwithſtanding the Authority of this Writer, we have Reaſon to think, that there was no Tree in theſe Parts of this Virtue, becauſe had its Virtue once been known, there is no Queſtion to be made, but that others, as well as *Moſes*, wou'd have made Uſe of it to the ſame Purpoſe; but that the Writers, who make mention of theſe bitter Waters, wou'd have told us at the ſame Time, of a Tree, or Trees, growing hard by, which had a *Medicinal* Quality to correct the Taſte of them; but ſince we meet with nothing of this Kind, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that the Author of *Eccleſiaſticus* (a Book of modern Compoſition in Compariſon of *Moſes*'s Writings) ſpeculating in the Chapter upon the Medicines, which God had provided for Man's Uſe, offer'd this Hint purely from his own Fancy, and without any Authority for it, and conſequently we may conclude, that the Correction of the Quality of this Water is to be aſcrib'd, not ſo much to the Virtue of the Wood, as to the Power of God, who us'd it, rather as a Sign to the *Iſraelites*, than as an Inſtrument to himſelf in doing it. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. lib. 10.

† In remarking the ſeveral Stations of the *Iſraelites*, from the *Red-Sea*, until they came to the Mount *Sinai*, we muſt obſerve, that *Moſes* does not ſet down every Place, where they encamp'd (as he does in *Numbers*, Chap. xxxiii.) but only thoſe, where ſome remarkable Thing was done; that *Elim*, where they were now encamp'd, was eſteem'd a pleaſant and fruitful Place, at leaſt in Compariſon of the Deſart and barren Parts about it; and that the *Deſart of Sin*, which was their *eighth* Station, and *Rephidim* their *Tenth*, lay at equal Diſtances, in their Way to the *holy* Mountain. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

† The Word, which we render *Quail*, according to the Confeſſion of the *Jews* themſelves, is of uncertain Signification, and may denote a *Locuſt*, as well as a *Quail:* But what ſhou'd rather incline us to the latter Acceptation, is that the Paſſage of the *Pſalmiſt*, (lxxviii. 27.) where he tells us, that *God rained Fleſh upon them, as thick as Duſt, and feathered Fowls, like as the Sand of the Sea*; which cannot, with any tolerable Propriety, be apply'd to *Inſects*. But here we muſt remember, that this was done in the Middle of *April*, when theſe Birds are known to fly out of *Egypt* croſs the *Red-Sea* in vaſt Quantities; ſo that the Sum of this Miracle will conſiſt, not ſo much in the prodigious Number of them, that fell in the *Iſraelites* Camp, as in God's directing them thither, and in that very Evening to, according to his Promiſe, and his Servant *Moſes* Prediction. Univerſal Hiſtory, l. 1. c. 7.

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ſaw, they were ſtruck with Admiration, and ſaid one to another, ‡ *what is this?* And from thence they gave it the Name of *Manna*.

God's Directions concerning it.

This was the Bread, which the *Iſraelites* were to eat for the Space of forty Years, and therefore God was pleas'd to give theſe ſpecial Directions concerning it. —— That it was to be gather'd by Meaſure, an *Homer* for every Head, according to the Number of each Family; but this Direction ſome Perſons ſlighting, and gathering above the Proportion that was allow'd them, found their Quantity miraculouſly leſſen'd, while the more moderate had theirs increas'd: That it was to be gather'd freſh every Morning, and all, that was gather'd, conſum'd that ſame Day; which Precept ſome Perſons likewiſe neglecting, and keeping a Part of it until the next Morning, found that it was putrify'd and ſtunk: That, on the *ſeventh* Day, (which was the † *Sabbath)* there was none to be found; and therefore, on the *ſixth*, they were to gather a *double* Portion, which being laid up, according to God's Direction, againſt the enſuing Day, was never once known to corrupt: And that, to perpetuate the Memory of this † miraculous Bread, wherewith God had fed their Forefathers in the Wilderneſs ſo long, an *Homer* of it ſhou'd be put up in a Pot, and repoſited in the *Ark of the Covenant* within the *Sanctuary*.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

They murmur again for Want of Water, and are miraculouſly ſupply'd.

From the Deſart of *Sin* the *Iſraelites* had not advanc'd many Days Journey towards *Horeb*, 'till, coming to *Rephidim*, and finding no Water there, they fell into their old Way of diſtruſting God's Providence, and murmuring againſt *Moſes*; but on this Occaſion, they ſeem'd to be more mutinous and deſperate than ever. It was in vain for *Moſes* to endeavour to perſuade them to be patient a little, and wait God's Leiſure. His Words did but inflame, and carry them to ſuch an Height of Rage, that they even threaten'd to ſtone him; ſo that he was forc'd to have Recourſe to God, who

‡ Our Tranſlation, and ſome others, make *Moſes* fall into a plain Contradiction, in relating this Story of the *Manna*, which they render thus; *And when the Children of* Iſrael *ſaw it, they ſaid one to another, it is* Manna, *for they wiſt not what it was*, Exod. xvi. 15. whereas the *Septuagint*, and ſeveral Authors, both antient and modern, have tranſlated the Text according to the Original, *The* Iſraelites *ſeeing this, ſaid one to another, what is this? For they knew not what it was:* For we muſt obſerve, that the Word, by which they aſk'd *(what is this?)* was, in their Language, *Man*, which ſignifies likewiſe *Meat ready prepared*; and therefore it was always afterwards call'd *Man*, or *Manna*. Various are the Conceits, which the *Jewiſh* Writers have entertain'd concerning the Taſte of this *Manna*, and ſome of them not unlikely have been borrow'd from the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom*, where he tells us of *Manna*, *that it was able to content every Man's Delight, agreeing to every Taſte, and attempering itſelf to every Man's Liking*, Wiſd. xvi. 20, 21. Whereupon ſome have affirm'd, that it had the *Taſte* of any Sort of Fiſh or Fowl, according to the Wiſh of him that eat it, but theſe are idle Fancies; what we know of Certainty is this, —— That, here in *Exodus*, *Moſes* tells us, that its *Taſte was like Wafers made with Honey*, and in *Numbers*, he ſays, that the Cakes made of it had the *Taſte of freſh Oil*, Chap. xi. 8. ſo that we may conjecture, that it had a Sweetneſs, when gather'd, which evaporated in the grinding, and baking. It taſted like *Honey*, when taken off the Ground, but the Cakes made of it were as Cakes of Bread kneaded with *Oil*. Eſſay for a new Tranſlation, and *Shuckford*'s Connect. Vol. III. l. 10.

† This ſeems to be the firſt Time, that the *Reſt on the ſeventh Day* was ſolemnly appointed. God indeed, from the very firſt, intended to preſerve the Memory of the *Creation* in ſix Days, by appointing the *ſeventh Day* to be kept holy; but when, before the Flood, Men grew ſo wicked, as to neglect the Thoughts of God, they very little regarded the Diſtinction between this Day and others; and, after the Flood, the Diſperſion of Mankind very much blotted it out of their Minds, as it did many other good Things. In the Family of *Abraham*, we may preſume, the Remembrance of it was preſerv'd, though not with ſuch a ſtrict Abſtinence from all Labour, as was afterwards injoin'd; and therefore we read nothing of their reſting from their Travels upon that Day, before their coming out of *Egypt*. The Truth is, they were kept under ſuch ſevere Servitude, and Day and Night ſo preſs'd by their Taſkmaſters to hard Labour without Intermiſſion, that all Obſervation of the *Sabbath* was, very likely, laid aſide; but when God brought them out of Slavery, he renew'd his Commandment for it, with this Addition (in Memory of the *Egyptian* Bondage) that they ſhou'd reſt from all Manner of Labour upon that Day. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Whether this *Manna* had thoſe extraordinary Qualities in it or no, which ſome imagine, it muſt be allow'd to be truly *miraculous* upon the following Accounts: 1. That it fell but ſix Days in the Week. 2. That it fell in ſuch a prodigious Quantity, as ſuſtain'd almoſt three Millions of Souls. 3. That there fell a double Quantity every *Friday*, to ſerve them for the next Day, which was their *Sabbath*. 4. That what was gather'd on the firſt five Days ſtunk, and bred Worms, if kept above one Day, but that which was gather'd on *Friday*, kept ſweet for two Days. And laſtly, That it continu'd falling while the *Iſraelites* abode in the Wilderneſs, but ceas'd as ſoon as they came out of it, and had got Corn to eat in the Land of *Canaan*. Univerſal Hiſtory, l. 1. c. 7.

Nap. Orsini Pinx.

Sr. Marigni direx.

And the Lord said unto Moses, behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb, and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the Elders of Israel. **Exodus Chap. XVII. Ver: VI**

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who was ſoon pleas'd to diſſipate his Fears by promiſing to ſignalize that Place by a miraculous Supply of Water, as he had lately done another by a miraculous Supply of *Food*. Taking therefore the Elders of the People (who might bear Teſtimony to the Fact) along with him, *Moſes*, as he was commanded by God, went to a certain *Rock* on the Side of Mount *Horeb*, (which was diſtinguiſh'd from all the reſt by the divine Appearance reſting upon it) and no ſooner had he ſmitten it with his Rod, but Water in Abundance guſh'd out at ſeveral Places, and, joining in one common Stream, † ran down to the Camp at *Rephidim*. This *Station* however, becauſe it was ſo infamous for the Mutiny of the People, and their Diſtruſt of God, *Moſes* (as a Caution and Remembrance to them for the future) thought proper to have call'd *Maſſah*, and *Meribah*, which ſignify *Temptation* and *Contention*.

They defeat the Amalekites.

WHILE the *Iſraelites* continu'd at *Rephidim*, they were alarm'd by the Approach of an Army of *Amalekites*, who were juſt upon their Heels, and ready to fall upon them. Hereupon *Moſes* order'd *Joſhua*, a valiant young Man who was always about him, to draw out a Party of the choiceſt Men in the Camp, againſt next Morning, and to give the *Amalekites* Battle. When the next Morning came, *Moſes*, attended by *Aaron* and *Hur*, went to the Top of an *Eminence*, from whence they might have a View of the Field of Battle; and, as the two Armies were engag'd, ſo it was, that while *Moſes* held up his Hands to God in Prayer, and in one of them his wonder-working Rod, the *Iſraelites* prevail'd; but when, through Wearineſs, his Hands began to drop, the *Amalekites* had the better; which *Aaron* and *Hur* perceiving, ſet him down upon a Stone, and ſupported his Hands on each Side, until the going down of the Sun, in which Time the *Amalekites* were quite routed, and put to the Sword.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

THIS good Succeſs, in their firſt *martial* Enterprize, gave the *Iſraelites* great Encouragement; and the Action indeed was ſo very remarkable, that, to tranſmit it to Poſterity, *Moſes* was order'd to record it in a Book, for *Joſhua*'s future Inſtructions, and to offer a Sacrifice of Thankſgiving: Whereupon he rais'd, upon the Spot, an Altar, which he call'd *Jehovah Niſſi, the Lord is my Banner*, as never doubting, but that God, who had commanded him to denounce † inceſſant War againſt the *Amalekites*, wou'd not fail to crown it with Succeſs.

THE

† It was this ſame Water which ſerv'd the *Iſraelites*, not only in this Encampment of *Rephidim*, and in that of Mount *Sinai*, but in their other Encampments likewiſe, perhaps as far as *Cadiſh-Barnea*. For the *Jews* have a Tradition, that, as theſe Waters were granted for the Sake of the Merits of *Miriam*, *Moſes*'s Siſter; ſo they happen'd to fail, as ſoon as ſhe dy'd; and hence it is, that, at the Encampment of *Cadiſh-Barnea*, which was ſoon after the Death of *Miriam*, we find the People falling into Murmurings again for want of Water. St *Paul*, ſpeaking of this miraculous Rock, which he makes the Type of *Jeſus Chriſt*, tells us, that *it followed them*, 1 Cor. x. 4. And from hence ſome have inferr'd, either that the Streams, which guſh'd out of the Rock, form'd themſelves into a Kind of River, which follow'd them through all their Encampments, or that they carry'd the Rock itſelf in a Cart, like a great Tun always full, and always open to thoſe that had an Inclination to drink. But theſe are idle Fictions, drawn from Words, that are not to be underſtood in a literal Senſe; what we may learn of Certainty from modern Travellers is, ——— That, at the Foot of the Mount *Hereb*, there is ſtill to be ſeen a Brook of Water, but as for the Rock itſelf, which is a vaſt large Stone ſtanding ſeparate by itſelf, there is no Water, that now runs from it, though there are, at preſent, to be ſeen twelve Holes, or Mouths, as it were, from whence the Water did flow heretofore. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Rephidim*, and *Morizan*'s Voyages, l. 1. c. 1.

† The *Amalekites* were a People deſcended from *Amalek*, the Son of *Eliphaz*, the Son of *Eſau*, by a Concubine, *Gen.* xxxvi. 12. And the Ground of their Enmity againſt the *Iſraelites* is generally ſuppos'd to have been an innate Hatred, from the Remembrance of *Jacob*'s depriving their Progenitor both of his *Birth-right* and *Bleſſing*. Their falling upon them however, and that without any Provocation, when they ſaw them reduc'd to ſo low a Condition by the Fatigue of their March, and the exceſſive Drought, they labour'd under, was an inhuman Action, and juſtly deſerv'd the Defeat, which *Joſhua* gave them: But then the Reaſon, why God thought fit to denounce a perpetual War againſt them, is to be reſolv'd into this, ——— That, knowing the *Iſraelites* were pre-ordain'd by God to be put in Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*, they came againſt them with an armed Force, in Hopes of fruſtrating the Deſigns of Providence concerning them. And this is the Reaſon, which *Moſes* himſelf aſſigns for this Declaration of

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Jethro *viſits* Moſes, *and adviſes him to appoint* Deputies *under him.*

The Defeat of the *Amalekites* open'd a Way for the *Iſraelites* to Mount *Sinai*, where God at firſt appear'd to *Moſes* in the *Burning-Buſh*, and not far from the Place, where his Father-in-law *Jethro* dwelt; † who, having heard what mighty Things God had done for him, and the People he conducted, took his Daughter *Zipporah*, *Moſes*'s Wife, and the two Sons *Gerſhom*, and *Eliezar*, which he had by her, and brought them with him to the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp: Where, after mutual Salutations and Embraces, *Moſes* entertain'd him with a particular Account of every Thing, that had befallen him, during his Abſence; and, in Return, *Jethro*, who was a devout Man, offer'd up ſolemn Praiſes to God, and join'd with *Moſes*, and the reſt of the *Elders of Iſrael*, in Sacrifices, and ſuch holy Rejoicings, as were thought proper upon this Occaſion.

While *Jethro* ſtay'd in the Camp, he cou'd not but perceive the great Weight of Buſineſs, in hearing Complaints, and determining Differences among ſo numerous a People, which *Moſes* muſt neceſſarily labour under; and therefore he gave him Advice, to ſubſtitute under him a certain Number of Officers, Men of Parts, and Men of Courage, ſuch as *fear'd God*, and *hated Covetouſneſs*, to be Rulers, ſome over *Thouſands*, ſome over *Hundreds*, ſome over *Fifties*, and ſome over *Tens*, with proper Authority, for them to hear, and determine † all ſuch Matters, as they were able, but where Cauſes were too difficult for their Deciſion, theſe to refer to him; which, in the Event, *as he told him*, wou'd prove a great Eaſe and Advantage both to himſelf, and the People: And this Advice of his as ſoon as he ſaw put in Execution, *Jethro* took leave of his *Son-in-Law*, and return'd into his own Country.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

It

War; *becauſe his*, (i. e. *Amalek's*) *Hand is againſt the Throne of God*, (i. e. againſt God himſelf) *therefore the Lord will wage War againſt him from one Generation to another*, Exod. xvii. 16. The Injury done the *Iſraelites* was not ſo much, as the Affront offer'd to the divine *Majeſty*, and therefore God threatens utterly to extirpate the Deſigners of it. Univerſal Hiſtory, l. 2. c. 7. and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† When it was, that *Jethro* came from *Midian* to viſit his Son in-law *Moſes*, whether immediately after the Fight with the *Amalekites*, as it is here ſet down, or ſome Time after, when the *Iſraelites* were better ſettled, is a Matter much controverted amongſt Interpreters. The *Jews* are generally agreed, and to them do ſome other great Names (as well as the learned *Uſher* and *Selden*) aſſent, that this Viſit happen'd after the Promulgation of the Law, in the firſt Year of their coming from *Egypt*, and in the Month *Tiſri* (ſay the *Jews*) above three Months after God gave *Moſes* the *ſecond* Tables; though others will have it to have been in the ſecond Year. It ſeems reaſonable to think however, that *Jethro* wou'd take the firſt Opportunity to viſit *Moſes*, and to bring him and ſo near Relations together, when once he had heard the News of their Departure from *Egypt*, and paſſing the *Red-Sea*; which he (as a Borderer upon the Wilderneſs) cou'd not long be a Stranger to. It is to be obſerv'd farther, that, had the Law been given before *Jethro*'s Arrival in the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp, *Moſes* cou'd hardly have eſcap'd ſaying ſomething of the moſt remarkable Paſſage of all others, God's glorious Appearance upon Mount *Sinai*, and the *Decalogue*, which he pronounc'd from thence: Whereas, all that he relates at this Meeting, is, what God had done to *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*; in what Manner he *had deliver'd his People*: and *what Travail had come upon them by the Way*, which comprehend their Paſſage of the *Red-Sea*, their Want of Water and Bread, their Engagement with the *Amalekites*, and, in ſhort, whatever we read in the foregoing Chapters. But of the moſt momentous Thing of all, we find him making no mention, nor *Jethro*, in the Congratulations which he gives him, taking any Manner of Notice; which we can hardly ſuppoſe wou'd, on either Side, have been omitted, had they been *prior* to this Interview; nor can we conceive, for which Reaſon *Moſes* ſhou'd place the Account of this Interview in immediate Succeſſion, had it not follow'd the Fight with the *Amalekites*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The Words of the Text are, *Every great Matter they ſhall bring to thee, but every ſmall Matter they ſhall judge*, Exod. xviii. 22. And from hence ſome have imagin'd, that there were ſeveral Sorts of Cauſes, that might not, at firſt, be brought before inferior Courts, and theſe they make to be four. 1. All *ſacred* Matters, or Things relating to God and Religion. 2. All Matters of *Equity*, where the Rigour of the Law was to be mitigated. 3. All *capital* Caſes: And laſtly, all ſuch Caſes, as the *Rulers of Thouſands* referr'd to *Moſes*. What the other Rulers referr'd to him was indeed properly under his Cognizance, becauſe it ſuppos'd an Incapacity in them, either for the Want of ſome Law, or a Non-agreement among themſelves, to determine it; but, where nothing of this happen'd, they had a full Power to judge finally. Neither was it the People (when a Cauſe was thought intricate) that were to bring it *primarily* before *Moſes*, but, when any ſuch Difficulty aroſe, as they were not able to ſurmount, the *Judges* (as *Moſes* himſelf directs them, *Deut.* i. 17.) were the Perſons, that were to order the Appeal to him. *Bring it to me*, ſays he, *and I will hear it*; which ſhews, that the Cauſe had been before the Bar of inferior Courts before, only they were not ſkilful enough to determine it. So that the Words in the Text do not intimate, that there were ſome Cauſes, which the other Judges might not try, if they were able; but only, where the *Cauſes were heard*, and they incompetent to decide them, theſe they were to refer to *Moſes*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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IT was three Months after their Departure out of *Egypt*, when the *Iſraelites* came, and encamp'd in the Wilderneſs of *Sinai*, before the Mount of God: And, they had not been long there, before God, call'd *Moſes* to come up to him on the Mount, and there charg'd him to remind the *Iſraelites* of the many Wonders he had wrought in their Favour; and that, (notwithſtanding their frequent Murmurings, and Diſtruſt of his Providence,) if, for the future, they wou'd become obedient to his Laws, he wou'd ſtill look upon them as his peculiar People, a favourite Nation, and a *Royal Prieſthood*.

God pronounces the Ten Commandments *from Mount* Sinai.

UPON his Deſcent from the Mount, *Moſes* made a Report to the *Elders*, and they to the People, of the gracious Meſſage, which God had ſent them; which as ſoon as the People heard, they promis'd, in Return, all poſſible Obedience to the divine Commands. With this Anſwer of the People's *Moſes* aſcended the Mountain again, and receiv'd a Command from God, that all the People ſhou'd purify themſelves, and be in Readineſs againſt the *third Day*; for that, within three Days, ‖ he wou'd come down upon the Mountain, and make a Covenant with them. In the mean Time he gave him ſtrict Charge to ſet Boundaries about the Foot of the Mountain, which none might adventure to paſs, under the ſevereſt Penalties: And when he had thus done, and the People had prepar'd themſelves, according to the divine Injunction, on the third Day, they ſaw, early in the Morning, the Mountain ſurrounded with a thick Cloud, out of which proceeded ſuch terrible Thunder and Lightnings, as fill'd them with Horror and Amazement. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

THE Signal, for the People to approach the Mountain, was upon the firſt Sounding of the Trumpet; and therefore, as ſoon as it began, *Moſes* brought them out of the Camp, as near to the Mountain, as the Barrier wou'd permit, and there they obſerv'd the whole Top of *Sinai* cover'd with Fire and Smoak, while the Foundations of it ſeem'd to tremble and ſhake under them. * In the midſt of this dreadful Scene, the Trumpet was heard to

‖ It muſt be obſerv'd here, as alſo in other Places of the like Nature, that the Scripture, ſuiting itſelf to Man's common Way of Speaking and Thinking, aſſigns ſuch Things to God, as are only proper to the *Effects*. Thus it is ſaid, that God *deſcended on the Mountain*, becauſe he made his Preſence more viſible there by ſenſible and ſurpriſing Effects: And whereas it is ſaid by the *Protomartyr*, St *Stephen*, (Acts vii. 53) *that the* Jews *received the Law by the Diſpoſition of Angels*, and by St *Paul* to the *Galatians*, iii. 19. *that the Law was ordained by Angels in the Hand of a Mediator*, there is in theſe, and the like Paſſages, no Contradiction between the *New* and *Old Teſtament*, which aſſigns all this Diſpenſation to God himſelf. For, though it was God, who deſcended (in the Senſe we have explain'd it) upon the Mount, yet the Angels, theſe Courtiers of Heaven, attended him, and made up his Train: and though he himſelf pronounc'd the Law, yet the Thunder, and Lightnings, and Noiſe reſembling the Sounding of a Trumpet, which were preparatory to ſuch Pronunciation, may not improperly be aſcrib'd to the Miniſtry of Angels. The Intent, however, of theſe Paſſages in the *New Teſtament* is only to oppoſe the *Goſpel* to the *Law* in this Reſpect, *viz.* that, when God gave the *Law*, he was ſurrounded with an awful Hoſt of *Angels*, but when our Lord deliver'd the *Goſpel*, he was cloath'd in our Fleſh, and adapted himſelf to our Weakneſs. *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible, and *Millar*'s Church Hiſtory.

* Of all the Deſcriptions, that I ever read, there is no one ſeems to me ſo awful and tremendous, as this *Deſcent* of God upon Mount *Horeb*, and the amazing *Phænomena*, that attended it. The Pomp pretended to by *Pagan* Deities, even when ſet off with the Grandeur of Poetry, and the Magic of Numbers, is uncouth, ridiculous, and profane. The Proceſſion of *Bacchus*, as it is deſcrib'd by *Ovid*, (Lib. III.) is neither more nor leſs, than a downright *drunken Riot*, or the brutal Paſtime of a *diſorderly Country-Wake*. The boiſterous Expedition of *Neptune*, even as it is painted by the great Maſter, *Homer*, (Iliad. xiii.) ſeems to repreſent nothing more auguſt, than the Roaring of *London Bridge*, or a Rabble of Sea-Monſters friſking in a Storm: Nay, that very famous Speech of *Jupiter*, (Iliad. xviii) where he maintains his *Supereminence*, by *ſhaking* Olympus *with his Imperial Nod*, and *menacing* his refractory *Offspring*, in Caſe they ſhou'd *rebel*, tho' it certainly be embelliſh'd with the utmoſt Force of Words, and Stretch of Art, is, at the beſt, but a *lame* and *imperfect Copy*, in the main Strokes of it, from the native Majeſty of this unlabour'd Proſe, in the xixth Chapter of *Exodus*. It muſt be own'd however, that our *Engliſh* Poet *Milton* has, in ſeveral Places, deſcrib'd the uſual Diſplay of the Divine Majeſty in a very magnificent Manner.

——— ——— Clouds began
To darken all the Hill, and Smoak to rowl
In duſky Wreaths, reluctant Flames, the Sight
Of Wrath awak'd: Nor with leſs dread the Loud

Ethereal

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to ſound louder and louder, Claps of Thunder, and Flaſhes of Fire were more and more ingeminated; 'till, all on a ſudden, every Thing was huſh and ſilent, and then God was heard, from the Midſt of the Fire and Smoak, (which ſtill continu'd) to pronounce the Law of the *Decalogue*, or * Ten Commandments, which is indeed a compleat *Syſtem* of the *moral* Part of the *Jewiſh* Inſtitutes, and in few, but ſignificant Words, comprehends their Duty to God, to their Neighbour, and to Themſelves.

In the mean Time the People, aſtoniſh'd at what they ſaw and heard, remov'd farther off, and, as ſoon as the divine Voice had ceas'd ſpeaking, came to *Moſes*, and, in the Height of their Fear and Surprize, beſought of him, that, for the future, he wou'd ſpeak to them in God's Stead, and whatever he enjoin'd them they wou'd obey, becauſe they were conſcious, that were they to hear his dreadful Voice again, they ſhou'd certainly die with Horror and Aſtoniſhment. This Motion, as it beſpake their Reverence and Reſpect, was not diſpleaſing to *Moſes*; and therefore he aſſur'd them, that all this wonderful Scene was not exhibited to them with a Deſign to create in them any *ſlaviſh* Fear, but a *filial* Confidence, and Submiſſion to ſuch Laws, as the divine Wiſdom ſhou'd hereafter think fit to enjoin them: And, with theſe Words, he went up to the Mount again, where, (in Addition to the *Decalogue*) he receiv'd from God ſeveral other Laws, both *ceremonial* and *political*, which ſeem to have been calculated with a wiſe Deſign to preſerve the People in their Obedience to God, to prevent their Intermixture with other Nations, and to advance the Welfare of their *Commonwealth*, by ſecuring to all the *Members* of it a quiet Enjoyment of their *Lives* and *Properties*.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Gives the Iſraelites *other Precepts, and makes a Covenant with them.*

With this Body of Laws, which were all that God, for the preſent, thought fit to enjoin, *Moſes* returning from the Mount, erected an Altar to God, and offer'd Burnt-Sacrifices and Peace-Offerings upon it; and, having caus'd the Contents of this new Covenant to be read to all the People, and exacted a ſolemn Promiſe from them, that they would keep it faithfully, he confirm'd this Covenant, by ſprinkling the Altar, the Book, and the People with the Blood of the *Victims*, which were ſlain upon this Occaſion; and then order'd twelve *Pillars* to be rais'd, according to the Number of the twelve Tribes, as a ſtanding Monument of this Alliance between God and them.

As ſoon as *Moſes* had made an End of this Ceremony, he took *Nadab*, *Abihu*, and ſeventy of the Elders of *Iſrael* ſome Part of the Way towards the Mountain, where, (without incurring any Hurt) they were vouchſaf'd a Proſpect of the divine Preſence,

Ethereal Trumpet from on high 'gan blow,
At which Command, the Powers Militant,
That ſtood for Heaven, in mighty *Quadrate* join'd
Of Union irreſiſtable, mov'd on
In Silence their bright Legions, to the Sound
Of inſtrumental Harmony. ———
Again, He on his impious Foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as Night: Under his burning Wheels
The ſtedfaſt *Empyrean* ſhook throughout,
All but the Throne of God. ———
And again, He ended, and the Sun gave Signal high
To the bright Miniſter, that watch'd: He blew
His Trumpet, heard on *Oreb*, ſince perhaps
When God deſcended, and perhaps once more
To ſound the general Doom. ——— *Paradiſe Loſt*, Lib. vi. and xi.

* Theſe Ten *Commandments*, as contain'd in the xxth Chapter of *Exodus*, are ſo very well known, that there is no Occaſion here for the Repetition of them: And in what Manner they are to be diſpos'd of in the two *Tables*; whether *four* are to be plac'd in the *firſt*, and *ſix* in the *ſecond* Table (which is the common Diſtribution) or an *equal* Number is to be appropriated to each Table (as *Philo*, and his Followers among the *Jewiſh Rabbins* contend) is not a Queſtion of Moment enough to be diſcuſs'd in this Place.

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Preſence, and where, having committed the Care of the People to them, he took *Joſhua* along with him, and went up higher to the Top of the Mount, where he continu'd for the Space of forty Days.

Moſes *receives Inſtructions concerning the* Tabernacle, *&c.*

HERE it was that God, calling him nearer to himſelf, and into the Cloud, where he then reſided, inſtructed him in what Manner the Tent, or *Tabernacle*, wherein he intended to be worſhipp'd, was to be made. He deſcrib'd to him the Form of the *Sanctuary*, the Table for the *Shew-bread*, the Altar of *Frankincenſe*, the Altar for *Burnt-Offerings*, the Court of the *Tabernacle*, the Baſon to waſh in, the Ark, the Candleſtick, and all the other ſacred Utenſils. He gave him the Form of the ſacerdotal Veſtments, and taught him how the Prieſts were to be conſecrated; what Part of the Oblation they were to take, and in what Manner the perpetual Sacrifice was to be offer'd. He nam'd the two chief Men, *Bezaleel*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, and *Aholiab*, of the Tribe of *Dan*, who were to be the Builders of the Tabernacle; and, having recommended a ſtrict Obſervation of the *Sabbath*, he gave him the two ‖ Tables of Stone, wherein, with his own Hand, at leaſt by his own Direction, were written the Ten great Commandments, which were the Sum and Subſtance of the *moral* Law.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

The People in the mean Time make them a Golden Calf.

WHILE *Moſes* was converſing with God on the Mount, and *Joſhua* waiting for his Return, the People in the Camp, who, by Reaſon of his long Abſence, began now to give him over for loſt, aſſembled themſelves in a riotous Manner about *Aaron*'s Tent, and demanded of him to make them ſome Gods to go before them. The Demand was aſtoniſhing, and ſuch was his Weakneſs, and Want of Courage, that; inſtead of expoſtulating the Matter with them, he tamely ſubmitted to their Requeſt; nay, he contributed not a little to their *Idolatry*, by ordering them to bring him a ſufficient Quantity of their golden Ornaments, which, when he receiv'd from them, ‡ he tied *in a Bag*, and thereof made

‖ Who was the firſt Inventor of Letters, and what Nation had the Invention ſooneſt amongſt them, is variouſly diſputed by the Learned. The Invention ſeems to be a little too exquiſite, to have proceeded from Man; and therefore we have, not without Reaſon, (Page 206.) deriv'd its Original from God himſelf, who might teach it *Adam*, and *Adam* his Poſterity. As to particular Nations however, ſome ſay that the *Phœnicians*, others the *Ethiopians*, and others again that the *Aſſyrians* had the firſt Invention of them; but, upon better Grounds, it is thought by *Euſebius*, (in his *Prepar. Evang.* l. 18.) that *Moſes* firſt taught the Uſe of Letters to the *Jews*, and that the *Phœnicians* learnt them from them, and the *Grecians* from the *Phœnicians*. The *Matter*, whereon Men wrote, in ruder Times, was different; ſome, on the Rinds of Trees, others on Tiles, and others on Tables, which laſt was chiefly in Uſe among the *Jews*; and probably from this Example given them by God. The *Inſtrument*, wherewith they wrote, was not a Pen, but a Kind of *Engraver*, made of Iron or Steel, call'd a *Stylus*, which was ſharp at one End, for the more convenient indenting, or carving the Character, and broad at the other, for the Purpoſe of ſcraping it out. To perpetuate the Memory of any Thing, the Cuſtom of Writing on Stone or Brick was certainly very antient, and (as *Joſephus*, in the Caſe of *Seth*'s Pillars, tells us, Antiq. l. 11.) elder than the Time of the Flood. The Words of the *Decalogue*, ſpoken by God himſelf, were ſuch, as deſerv'd to be had in everlaſting Remembrance; and therefore God was willing to have them engrav'd upon durable Matter; but then the Queſtion is, Whether it was God himſelf, with *his own Finger*, as we ſay, or ſome other Perſon, from God's Mouth, who wrote them. In *Exodus* xxxiv. 27, 28. we are told, that *the Lord ſaid unto* Moſes, *write thou theſe Words; for, after the Tenour of theſe Words, have I made a Covenant with thee, and with* Iſrael; and that, accordingly, *he wrote upon the Tables the Words of the Covenant*, even *the Ten Commandments*. Now ſince it is a common Form of Speech, that what a Superior commands to be done, that he does himſelf; the Meaning can be no more, than that the Words of the *Decalogue* were written by the Hand of *Moſes*, but by the Direction and Dictation of God. *Howell*'s, and the Univerſal Hiſtory.

‡ The Words in the Text are theſe ——— *All the People brake off the golden Ear-rings, which were in their Ears, and brought them unto* Aaron, *and he received them at their Hands, and faſhioned it with a Graving Tool, after he had made it into a molten Calf*, Exod. xxxii. 3, 4. But here ſeems to be a great Miſtake in moſt Verſions, as well as *our own*, and what but few Criticks and Expoſitors have yet eſpied. For it may very well be aſk'd, who taught *Aaron* to engrave, or how cou'd this *Idol* be engraven ſo ſoon, ſince it is ſaid, that *Aaron* preſented it to the People on *the Morrow?* If the Cuſtom of engraving molten Work was then known, how comes it, that we hear nothing of it even in *Solomon*'s Time, ſince it may be preſum'd, that the Furniture of *Solomon*'s Temple was wrought with much more Art, than the Figure of *Aaron*'s Calf? The whole Foundation of this Miſtake ſeems to lie in the Ambiguity of the *Hebrew* Word *Tſour*, which ſometimes ſignifies to *faſhion*, and ſometimes to *bind* or *tie*, and of the Word *Chereth*, which ſignifies a *Graving-tool*, and ſometimes a *Sack*, or *Bag*, 2 Kings v. 23. And therefore the Nature and Circum-

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made them a molten Calf. Nor was this all, for ſeeing them ſo highly delighted with their new-made God, he ſet it upon a Pedeſtal, in full Sight of the Camp, built an Altar before it, and appointed the next Day for a ſolemn Feſtival, which was begun with offering of Sacrifices to it, and concluded with Feaſting, and Dancing, and all † Kinds of *noiſy* Mirth.

God's Indignation hereupon.

God, in the mean Time, who knew what had paſs'd in the Camp, acquainted his Servant *Moſes*, that the People, whom *he had brought out of* Egypt, had ſo ſoon forgot their Promiſes and Engagements, that, at that very Time, they had made them a *molten* Image, and were worſhipping a *Golden Calf*; a Defection ſo provoking, that he threaten'd to extirpate the whole Nation of them, but, at the ſame Time, promis'd to make him the Father and Founder of a Nation, as numerous, and more powerful than theſe ungrateful Rebels were. But ſo far was *Moſes* from ſeeking his own Intereſt in their Deſtruction, that he threw himſelf at the Feet of the Lord, and interceded for their Pardon with ſo much Importunity, that, having obtain'd a kind of Promiſe of it, he took the Tables, and his Servant *Joſhua* with him, and ſo haſten'd down from the Mount. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Moſes's juſt Concern, and Revenge upon the Ring-leaders.

As ſoon as they were come to the Bottom, *Joſhua* hearing the Noiſe, which the People were making, expreſs'd his Apprehenſions, that poſſibly there might be ſome *Alarm*, or *Engagement* in the Camp; but *Moſes*, who knew what had happen'd, told him, that the Noiſe ſeem'd to be an Indication of *Joy*, rather than of *War*; and, as they drew near, and ſaw the *Golden Calf*, and the People ſinging and dancing about it, *Moſes*, for Indignation, throwing down the *Tables* he had in his Hands, brake them in Pieces; and then, taking the *Idol-Calf*, he put it in the Fire, and melted it, and ſo † reducing it to Powder, and mixing the Powder in Water, (to make them more ſenſible of their Folly in worſhipping That for a God, which was to paſs through their Bodies) he made them drink it up.

After this, *Aaron* was call'd to give an Account, how he came to indulge the People in this idolatrous Humour; but all the Excuſe, that he cou'd make, turn'd upon their *tumultuous*, and his *timorous* Temper,

ſtances of the Thing here ſpoken of might have directed the Tranſlators to think of putting the great Quantity of Ear-rings, which were brought to *Aaron, into a Bag*; which wou'd have prevented the Incongruity, that the *Geneva* Verſion has incurr'd, of engraving the *Calf*, before it was molted; for ſo it runs, *he faſhioned the Ear-rings with a Graving tool, and made a molten Calf of them.* Eſſay for a new Tranſlation.

† The Words in the Text are, (Exod. xxxii. 6.) *the People ſat down to eat, and to drink, and roſe up to play*; and from hence ſome have ſuppos'd their Senſe to be, that, after the *Iſraelites* had eaten of the Sacrifices offer'd to this new *Idol*, and drank very plentifully, they committed *Fornication*, after the Manner of *Heathen* Worſhippers, and, as in After-Ages, they were induc'd to do in the Caſe of *Baal-peor*, Numb. xxv. 1, 2. It cannot be deny'd indeed, but that thoſe *ſacrifical* Feaſts, among the *Heathens*, were uſually attended with Drunkenneſs and Laſciviouſneſs, which generally go together; and that the Word, which we render *play*, is the ſame which *Potiphar*'s Wife makes uſe of, when ſhe tells her Huſband, that his *Hebrew* Slave came in to *mock* her, i. e. to violate her Chaſtity; but ſince there is no Intimation of this in the Story, but only of *their ſinging* and *dancing*, it is hardly preſumable, that they cou'd become ſo very profligate, the very firſt Day of their ſetting up Idol Worſhip. Much more reaſonable is it therefore to ſuppoſe, that all this Merriment of theirs was in Imitation of the *Egyptians*, who, when they had found out their God *Apis*, (whereof this *Golden Calf* was deſign'd for an *Emblem*) were us'd to bring him, in ſolemn Pomp, to *Memphis*, the Royal City, with Children going before in Proceſſion, and all the Company ſinging a Song of Praiſe to the Deity. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† This Action of *Moſes*, in melting, grinding, and pounding this *golden Idol*, in order to make the People *drink it*, is by ſome thought contrary to our preſent *Philoſophy*, and the Account, which *Alchymiſts* give us of the Nature of Gold. Nothing is more commonly receiv'd, than the Notion, that Gold cannot be *deſtroy'd*; and yet the *Royal Academy* at *Paris* have a Burning Glaſs, that will vitrify it in an Inſtant, by evaporating all the Sulphur of it, which crackles, and flies up in a thick Smoak, whilſt the *Glaſs*, that remains, can never be reduc'd into any other Form. That Gold can be reduc'd into a fine Power, every Gold-Beater can inform us; and who can tell, but that *Moſes* might have ſome particular Secret for doing this, which we know nothing of? By the Help of a File however he might grate it into a Duſt, as fine as Flour, that is ground in a Mill. But the *Rabbinical* Reaſon, for his giving the People this *Gold-Powder* to drink, *viz.* that he might diſtinguiſh the *Idolaters* from the reſt, (becauſe as ſoon as they had drank, the Beards of the former turn'd red) is a little too whimſical to be regarded. Univerſal Hiſtory, l. 1. c. 7.

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Temper, which compell'd him to comply with their Demand. But *Moſes*'s Buſineſs was, to take Vengeance on the Idolaters; and therefore, turning from his Brother *Aaron*, he call'd ſuch to his Aid, as had not been guilty in the late Rebellion, and, ſeeing ſome of the Tribe of *Levi* adjoin themſelves to him, † he appointed them to take their Swords, to go through the Camp, and, without any Reſpect to Age or Quality, Friendſhip or Conſanguinity, to kill all the *Ringleaders* of this idolatrous Defection, and their Adherents; which the *Levites* accordingly executed, ſo that, at this Time, there were about three thouſand Perſons ſlain. Nor did the *Levites*, in Conſideration of this their laudable Zeal and Obedience, go long unrewarded: For, upon the Inſtitution of the Prieſthood, they were appointed to the Honour and Emoluments of that Office, though in Subordination to that of *Aaron* and his Poſterity.

His Interceſſion for the People, and receiving from God freſh Tables of the Law.

THE People, in the mean Time, having ſeen this dreadful Example on the *Delinquents*, were not in a little Fear and Conſternation. But *Moſes*, the next Day contented himſelf with reproving them for their Ingratitude and extreme Folly, and at the ſame Time, promis'd them, that he wou'd go up to the Mount again, and try † how far his Prayers wou'd prevail with the divine Mercy, to avert the Puniſhment, which they juſtly deſerv'd. To ſhew however how highly they had offended God by their wicked *Apoſtacy*, he took a *Tent*, and, pitching it out of the Camp at a good Diſtance, he call'd it *the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, whither the *cloudy Pillar* (to let them ſee that God wou'd no longer dwell among them) immediately repair'd; and whither *Moſes*, whenever he wanted to conſult the *divine Oracle*, was wont to reſort. Nor was it long after this that God, (to comfort and encourage him under all the *Fatigue*, that he had with an obſtinate People) granted his Requeſt, and ſhew'd him as much of his *Glory*, as his Nature was able to bear, and gave him freſh Orders to prepare two other Tables of Stone, and to come up again to him on the Mountain all alone. *Moſes*, accordingly, early next Morning, repair'd to the Mountain, with the two Tables, and having proſtrated himſelf before God, implor'd of him to pardon the Sins of his People; which God graciouſly condeſcended to do, and withal to make a farther Covenant with them, upon Condition, that they wou'd keep his Commandments; wou'd obſerve his *Sabbaths*, his *Paſſover*, and other appointed *Feſtivals*; and wou'd not worſhip the Gods of the *Canaanites*, nor make any Alliances with the People of the Country.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

† This may be thought too hazardous an Undertaking, and, for a few *Levites* to kill 3000 of the People, impracticable; but as they had God's Warrant for what they did, and knew at the ſame Time, how timorous Guilt is apt to make Men, they might be confident, that none wou'd have Courage to oppoſe them. Before that *Moſes* call'd any *Avengers* to his Aſſiſtance, the Text tells us, that *he ſaw that the People were naked, for* Aaron *had made them naked to their Shame*, Exod. xxxii. 25. where, if by *Nakedneſs* we are (with ſome Expoſitors) to underſtand their Want of *Arms*, which they had laid aſide, that they might be more light and nimble to dance about the Idol, it is plain, that the *Levites* might have leſs Trouble in ſlaying ſuch a Number of People, loaded with Liquor perhaps, and (as it uſually happens in the Concluſion of a Feſtival) weary with Dancing and Sports, and without any Weapons about them, to make Reſiſtance. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† *Moſes* indeed was by Lineage a Deſcent of the Tribe of *Levi*, which, tho' it forfeited the *Primogeniture* and *Regalia*, by being concern'd in the Blood of the *Shechemites*, was nevertheleſs dignify'd with the *Prieſthood*, which gave him a Right of approaching God, as an *Interceſſor* for a rebellious and backſliding People. *Aaron*, in Strictneſs, was both the High-Prieſt, and his Elder Brother, but, beſides that, he, by his imprudent Compliance in the Buſineſs of the *Golden Calf*, had, at this Time, not only forfeited the Honour of *Mediation*, but ſtood himſelf in Need of an Atonement: There ſeems to be ſomething in the Character, that is given of *Moſes*'s ſingular *Meekneſs*, that might entitle him to the Spirit of Interceſſion, and make the younger, in this Office, be preferr'd before the elder. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Append. of the Occaſ. Annot.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1491, &c.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

The OBJECTION.

" THE Kindneſs of God to the *Iſraelites*, in giving them the Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*, was very remarkable; but, ſince he intended it at firſt, why did he delay it ſo long? *Hope deferred makes the Heart ſick*, ſays *Solomon*; and to be *forty Years* in executing what might have been done in *forty Days*, is hardly conſiſtent either with the Wiſdom or Goodneſs of God. Between *Egypt* and *Canaan* (if we may believe * *Philo*) there is not above three Days Journey; and therefore it looks a little ſtrange and unaccountable, that God ſhou'd not march his People directly thither, and ſettle them at once, rather than lead them aſide into a barren Wilderneſs, and there carry them in a *Wild-gooſe-Chace* for the Space of almoſt half a *Century*, always peſter'd with their Complaints, and forc'd to feed them at the Expence of Miracles. It can hardly be thought, from the Tenour of their Hiſtory, but that his particular Providence attended them, wherever they went: (*a*) As Miracles however are not to be multiply'd without a manifeſt Neceſſity, there is no Reaſon for our thinking, that God himſelf went before them, during their Travels in the Wilderneſs, in a *viſible Pillar of Fire and Smoak*, ſince the whole Matter (which the *Jews* make ſo much boaſt of) might be no more, *than a kind* of ambulatory Beacon, *or a huge*, portable Fire, *under the Direction of a proper Officer, and in a fit* Machine, *highly elevated on a Pole, which was carry'd before the firſt Line of the Camp, and from thence cou'd be ſeen by all the reſt.* This was a cuſtomary Practice, in waſte and deſolate Countries, for the Conveniency of Travelling; and therefore we may ſuppoſe, that the *Iſraelites*, when they enter'd the Wilderneſs, in Conformity to other Nations, made uſe of the ſame expedient; and that, to ſome ſuch portable *Fire* as this, whoſe *Flame*, but not its Smoak, might be very far ſeen *by Night*, and whoſe *Smoak*, but not its *Flame*, might be perceiv'd at a great Diſtance *by Day*, all the ſtrange Things, which are ſaid of the different *Phaſes* of this pretended miraculous Pillar, may with great Facility be referr'd.

" *MOSES*, no doubt, in ſundry Reſpects, was no mean Politician; and therefore he cou'd not but know, that the Pretence of a divine Revelation wou'd give his Laws a better Sanction among the People, and ſo, to prepare the Way, he devis'd the terrible *Scene* of God's deſcending upon Mount *Sinai*, and abiding there, in *Smoak* and *Thunderings*, and *Lightning*, while himſelf went up to receive his Will, but prohibited all the reſt (except his Brother *Aaron*, who was let into the *Myſtery*) (*b*) under the Penalty of immediate Death, to approach the Mountain: For had they been permitted to do this, the Secret had been ſoon found out, and the Miracle ſpoil'd, which in all Probability, (*c*) was Nothing more than a *Vulcano*, or Irruption of Fire out of the Top of the Mountain, whereof he knowing the Cauſe, took the Advantage, and *palm'd* it upon the People for the tremendous *Preſence of God*, attended with his *Hoſts of Angels*.

" AND indeed, conſidering the Nature of the *Laws*, which he deliver'd to the People, we have ſmall Reaſon to ſuppoſe that God had any Hand in them; ſince they are many of them *abſurd* and *ridiculous*, ſome contrary to common Juſtice,

" and

* De Vitâ *Moſis*, Lib. i. p. 627.

(*a*) *Toland*'s Hodegus. (*b*) Exod. xix. 12, 13. (*c*) *Nicholls*'s Conference with a Theiſt, p. 273.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

" and others Nothing elſe, but *Egyptian* " Rites reviv'd. For, even in *the moral* " *Part* of them, what can be more unrigh- " teous, than *(d)* God's *viſiting the Ini-* " *quity of the Fathers upon the Children,* " *unto the third and fourth Generation?* " In the *Political*, what more *unjuſt*, " than the ſetting up *Aſylums* for every " Rogue and Ruffian to flee to? What " more *cruel*, than the *Lex Talionis*, or " a Permiſſion to take Revenge in cold " Blood? What more *ridiculous*, than to " prohibit Men's ſowing *Maſlin*, or wear- " ing *Linſey-Woolſey*, or gravely to decree, " that an *Ox* and an *Aſs* ſhou'd not be " yoak'd together? And as for the *Cere-* " *monial*, *(e)* the *Urim* and *Thummim*, " the *Ark* and the *Cherubims*, the *High* " *Prieſts Veſtments*, and almoſt every Or- " dinance in the Worſhip of the *Taberna-* " *cle*, are manifeſtly borrow'd from the " *Egyptians*.

" *MOSES* perhaps knew better, and " wrote only according to the Conceptions " of the Vulgar, whom he purpos'd to keep " in Ignorance; or otherwiſe, we cannot " but ſay, that he diſcovers groſs Notions " of God, when *(f)* he talks of his *Face*, " his *Back-parts*, and his *covering* him " *with his Hand*; and, when he wiſhes " *(g) to be blotted out of the Book, that* " *God had written*, (which ſome ſuppoſe " to mean his *eternal Damnation)* he ſeems " to be abſolutely *profane* and *irreligious*, " devoid of all Fear of God, as well as " all Senſe of Danger in a *future State*.

" THE leſs Reaſon we have to wonder, " that we find *Aaron*, his Brother and " Companion in this Affair, and who " was now left *Regent* in his Abſence, ſo " eaſily complying with the impious Re- " queſt of the People, and, inſtead of " remonſtrating to the idolatrous Motion, " with his own Hands making them an " *Idol*, and with his own Mouth pro- " claiming a *Feſtival* in Honour of it: " But why he ſhou'd think of a *Calf*, " above all other Creatures, to be an *hiero-* " *glyphic* of the Deity, or why the People, " who had ſeen ſo much of the *Handy-* " *work* of God, ſhou'd be ſo overjoy'd at " the ſetting up the Figure of ſo *ſtupid* an " Animal, to be the Object of their Wor- " ſhip, may juſtly raiſe our Aſtoniſhment " and Admiration."

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Anſwer'd by ſhewing that the miraculous Cloud *was no Machine of human Contrivance.*

THAT in the Deſarts of *Arabia*, and ſuch extended Plains, (for there were no Cities, Rivers, or Mountains, for Land-Marks) it was a general Cuſtom, before the Invention of the *Compaſs*, to carry Fire before Armies, in order to direct their March; and that (notwithſtanding the preſent Uſe of the *Compaſs)* the Guidance of Fire is practis'd among the *Caravans* in the *Eaſt*, and by the great Number of *Pilgrims*, who go every Year from *Grand Cairo* in *Egypt*, to *Mecca* in *Arabia*, cannot, by any one, that is acquainted either with *ancient* or *modern* Hiſtory, be deny'd: And had the ſole Intent of the *cloudy Pillar* been, to guide, and conduct the *Iſraelites* in their Journies, there might have been more Grounds for aſſerting, that it was a *mere Machine of human Contrivance*, and had Nothing *miraculous* or *ſupernatural* in it. But, when it ſhall appear, that this *Pillar of a Cloud* was of much greater Uſe to the Children of *Iſrael*, than barely to conduct them; that in it reſided a ſuperior *Power* upon whom the Name and Attributes of God are conferr'd; that from it proceeded *Oracles*, and *Directions* what the People were to do, and *Plagues* and *Puniſhments*, when they had done amiſs; and that to it are aſcrib'd ſuch Motions and Actions, as cannot, with any Propriety of Speech, be apply'd to any *natural* Fire; it will, from hence, I hope, be concluded that this *Guidance* of the Cloud was a real Miracle; its *Subſtance* quite different from that of *portable* Fire preceding Armies; and its *Conductor* ſomething more than a mere Man.

THE firſt Mention, that is made of this *Phænomenon*, is in the thirteenth Chapter of *Exodus*, where *Moſes*, deſcribing the *Rout*

(d) Exod. xx. 5. *(e) Spencer*, de Legibus Heb. Lib. iii. *(f)* Exod. xxxiii. 20, &c. *(g)* Chap. xxxii. 32.

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Rout, which the *Iſraelites* purſu'd, tells us, that *(b)* they took their Journey *from* Succoth, *and encamp'd at* Etham, *at the Edge of the Wilderneſs, and the Lord went before them, by Day, in a Pillar of a Cloud, and, by Night, in a Pillar of Fire:* And what we are to underſtand by *the Lord, that went before them*, we are advertis'd in another Place; *(i) Behold I ſend my Angel before thee, to keep thee in the Way, and to bring thee into the Place, which I have prepar'd: Beware of him, and obey his Voice; provoke him not, for he will not pardon thy Tranſgreſſion, for my Name is in him*, i. e. my Name *Jehovah*, which is the proper and incommunicable Title of God. The next Place, wherein we find this *Pillar of a Cloud* mention'd, is in the 24th Chapter; *(k)* and *the Angel of God, which went before the Camp of* Iſrael, *removed, and went behind them, and the Pillar of the Cloud went from before their Face, and ſtood behind them, and it came between the Camp of the* Egyptians, *and the Camp of* Iſrael, *and was a Cloud and Darkneſs to them, but it gave Light to theſe.* There, is, in the ſame Book, another Place, where this Pillar is taken notice of; and that is, in the 33d Chapter, where God, being highly offended at the People's Impiety in making the *golden Calf*, refuſes to conduct them any longer himſelf, and propoſes to depute an *Angel* to ſupply his Place: *(l) When the People heard theſe evil Tidings, they mourned,* —— and *it came to paſs, as* Moſes *entered into the Tabernable, the cloudy Pillar deſcended, and ſtood at the Door of the Tabernacle, and the Lord talked with* Moſes. *All the People ſaw the Cloudy Pillar at the Tabernacle Door, and they roſe up, and worſhipped every Man at his Tent Door.* We have Occaſion to mention but one Place more, and that is in the 16th Chapter of *Numbers*, where the People murmur'd for the Loſs of *Korah*, and his Company: *(m) And it came to paſs, that when the Congregation was gathered againſt* Moſes, *and againſt* Aaron, *they looked towards the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and behold the Cloud covered it, and the Glory of the Lord appeared, and* Moſes *and* Aaron *came before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the Lord ſpake unto* Moſes, *ſaying, get you up from among the Congregation, that I may conſume them as in a Moment, and they fell upon their Faces; and* Moſes *ſaid unto* Aaron, *take a Cenſer, and put Fire therein from off the Altar, and put on Incenſe, and go quickly into the Congregation, and make an Atonement for them, for there is Wrath gone out from the Lord, the Plague is begun.* Now, from a bare Recital of theſe Paſſages, we cannot but obſerve, that the *Iſraelites* Pillar made quite another Appearance, than any *combuſtible* Matter, when ſet on Fire, and carry'd upon a Pole, can be ſuppos'd to do; that in this Pillar reſided a Perſon of *divine* Character and Perfections, and therefore call'd *the Lord, the Angel, the Angel of the Lord, and the Angel of his Preſence*, &c. that this Perſon was inveſted with a Power of demanding Homage and Obſervance, of both puniſhing and pardoning Tranſgreſſions, and to whom, even *Moſes* and *Aaron*, (as well as the reſt of the Congregation) might fall down on their Faces, and pay Obeyſance, without the Imputation of *Idolatry*. The whole Tenour of the Narration, in ſhort, ſeems to denote, that every one in the Congregation look'd upon the Pillar, as ſomething *awful* and *tremendous*, and the Perſon, reſiding therein, above the Rank and Dignity of any created Eſſence: And therefore the moſt general Opinion is, that he, to whom theſe divine Appellations, divine Powers, and divine Honours are aſcrib'd, was the *eternal Son of God*, with a Troop of bleſſed Angels attending him in bright and luminous *Forms*; and who, either by the Diſplay, or Contraction of their Forms, cou'd make the Cloud, they inhabited, either *condenſe*, or *expand* itſelf, either put on

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

(b) Numb. xxxiii. 5, 6. *(i)* Exod. xxiii. 20, 21. *(k)* Chap. xix. 20. *(l)* Chap. xxxiii. 4, &c. *(m)* Numb. xvi. 42, &c.

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on a *dark*, or *radiant* Appearance, according as the great *Captain* of their *Hoſt* ſignify'd his Pleaſure. For to ſuppoſe that mere Fire, without any *ſupernatural* Direction, cou'd appear in different Forms, at the ſame Time, with *Darkneſs* to one Sort of People, and *Light* to another, is a Thing incongruous to its Nature.

FOR how many Purpoſes this *miraculous* Pillar might ſerve the *Iſraelites*, it wou'd be Preſumption to determine; but this we may ſay with Safety, —— That, beſides its guiding them in their Journey, *(n)* it was of Uſe to defend them from their Enemies, that they might not aſſault them; of Uſe to cover them from the Heat of the Sun in the Wilderneſs, where there were few Trees, and no Houſes to ſhelter them; and of Uſe to convey the divine Will, and to be, as it were, a ſtanding *Oracle*, whereunto they might reſort upon all Occaſions. In this Cloud, we are told expreſsly, that *(o)* the *Lord* appear'd from the *Tabernacle*; from this Cloud, that *(p)* he call'd *Aaron* and *Miriam* to come before him; and, out of this Cloud again, that he ſent forth the Expreſſes of his *Wrath*, as well as the Tokens of his *Love*, among the whole Congregation: And therefore this Cloud cou'd, at that Time, be nothing elſe, but the *Vehicle* of God, as we may call it, or the Place of his *majeſtick* Appearance. Nor is the Conjecture improbable, that, from this very Inſtance, the Poets firſt took the Hint of making their Gods deſcend in a *Cloud*, and array'd with a bright *Effulgency*.

HOWEVER this be, it is certain, that the *Jews* were perſuaded of the Divinity of their Guide; otherwiſe, they wou'd not have expreſs'd ſuch undiſſembled Sorrow and Concern, upon hearing the News of his Intention to leave them: Nor cou'd *Moſes*, with all his Anthority, have ever prevail'd with them to wander ſo long in the Wilderneſs, expos'd to ſo many Dangers and Hardſhips, had they been ſatiſfy'd, that it was no more, than a Man, with ſome Fire, elevated upon a Pole, that was their *Conductor*. It may be allow'd indeed, that a Multitude of ſuch fiery *Machines* might be of Service to an Army in a March; but the Thing is utterly inconceivable, how a Company of *ſix hundred thouſand* Men, beſides Women and Children, and no ſmall Number of *Aſſociates*, together with all their Cattle, cou'd receive any great Benefit from only *one* of theſe, which at a moderate Diſtance, wou'd diminiſh into a ſmall Light, and at a larger be quite loſt; or, every Moment, was in Danger of being blown aſide by the Wind, or extinguiſh'd by the Rain.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

THE Scriptures every where repreſent the *Iſraelites* going out of *Egypt* with a *high Hand*, marching in a regular Order, and *(q) covered* by God, *in the Day, with a Cloud, and* led, *all the Night through, with a Light of Fire*; but a ſufficient Company of *Link-Boys*, plac'd in a regular Order to illuminate each Column, as they mov'd, wou'd have certainly been of more Uſe, and made a much better Appearance, than this pretended Mixture of *Smoak and Flame ſmothering, from an Iron Pot at the End of a long Pole*. For, from my Heart, I cannot conceive, what manner of Compariſon there can be, between the dark *fuliginous* Smoak, ariſing from a *culinary* Fire, and the glorious, heavenly, and bright Appearance of *(r) that burning Pillar of Fire, which* (as the Author of the Book of *Wiſdom* expreſſes it) *was both a Guide of their unknown Journey, and an harmleſs Sun to entertain them honourably.*

Why God led the Iſraelites *oſtile, thro' the Wilderneſs.*

THE Scripture indeed aſſigns but one Reaſon for God's conducting the *Iſraelites* by the Way of the Wilderneſs, (which was ſo much about) to the Land of *Canaan*, and that is, —— An Apprehenſion that the *Philiſtines* (through whoſe Country they were to go) being a bold and warlike People, wou'd, in all Probability, have diſputed the Paſſage with them,

(n) *Patrick*'s Commentary. (o) Deut. xxxi. 15. (p) Numb. xii. 5. (q) Pſal. lxxviii. 14. and cv. 39. (r) Wiſd. xviii. 3.

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which the others, deſtitute of Arms, (as they were) and having their Spirits broken with a long Servitude, were, in no Condition to make good: But, as the Almighty Power of their *Conductor* was ſufficient to make them ſuperior to all ſuch Obſtacles, we may well ſuppoſe, that a farther End, which the divine Providence might have herein, was to manifeſt his Glory and Goodneſs, by his conſtant Attendance upon them in this *luminous* Appearance, and by the many wonderful Works, which he did, to oblige them to his Service.

ACCORDING to the Courſe of the Country, *Moſes* might have march'd the People a much ſhorter Way; but then, we had heard nothing of the *Angel of God's Preſence* viſibly preceding them; nothing of his dividing the Sea to facilitate their Paſſage; nothing of his overwhelming their Enemies in thoſe very Floods, which to them were a Kind of Wall on each Side; nothing of his drawing out Rivers of Water from the ſtony Rock; nothing of his *(s) ſending down Manna upon them, and giving them Food from Heaven*; nothing of his *raining Fleſh as thick as Duſt, and feathered Fowls, like as the Sand of the Sea*; nothing of his amazing Deſcent upon Mount *Sinai*, when, in the lofty Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *(t) he bowed the Heavens, and came down, and it was dark under his Feet; he rode upon the Cherubims, and did fly; he came flying upon the Wings of the Wind; he made Darkneſs his ſecret Place, his Pavilion round about him with dark Water, and thick Clouds to cover him: There went a Smoak out of his Preſence, Hail-ſtones, and Coals of Fire, ſo that the Earth trembled and quaked, the very Foundations alſo of the Hills ſhook, and were removed.* The Wilderneſs, in ſhort, was the Scene, which God had made choice of, for the diſplay of his almighty Power and Goodneſs: There it was, that he *laid bare his Arm*, as he calls it, to the *Iſraelites*; that, every Day, he took care of their Meat, and Drink, and Indeficiency of their Cloathing; and had he not detain'd them there ſo long, he had not been ſo kind. It may be conſider'd farther, that, before this People were to be admitted into the Poſſeſſion of the Inheritance, which God had promis'd them, all Matters were to be adjuſted between him and them; and, to this Purpoſe, *Laws* were to be given, *Ordinances* inſtituted, and *Covenants* ſeal'd; but a Work of this Importance cou'd no where be ſo commodiouſly tranſacted, as in the Retirement of the Wilderneſs. Here it was, that God, in the Buſh talking with *Moſes*, gave it as a Token of his Promiſe, that the People, after their Deliverance, ſhou'd come to *Mount Horeb*, and *(u)* there *worſhip him*; and fit it was, that ſuch an Engagement on God's Part ſhou'd *now* receive its Accompliſhment. And, ſince it was no more than requiſite, that a Nation, deſign'd for ſuch peculiar Favours from God, ſhou'd be held ſome Time in a State of Probation, before they were admitted to it, and until the People, whom they were appointed to reject, had fill'd up *the Meaſure of their Iniquity*, and were ripe for Extirpation; therefore it is, that *Moſes* calls upon them *(x) to remember all the Way, which the Lord their God led them, for theſe forty Years in the Wilderneſs, to humble them, and to prove them, and to know what was in their Hearts, whether they would keep his Commandments or no.*

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

THESE Commandments, it muſt be own'd, were deliver'd to the *Iſraelites* with all the Enſigns of Horror, which the *Pſalmiſt*, ſo lately quoted, has deſcrib'd; but that there is no Ground to ſuſpect any *Deceit* in this wonderful Occurrence, is manifeſt from *Moſes*'s Dealing ſo openly with the People in this Matter, and ſuffering them to go up into the Mountain, after the Lord had departed from it. *(y) When the Trumpet ſoundeth long, they ſhall come up to the Mount.* This is the *Signal*, which God himſelf gives them; whereas,

No Colluſion in the Mount, *whence God gave his Laws.*

(s) Pſal. lxxviii. 24, &c. *(t)* Pſal. xviii. 9, &c. *(u)* Exod. iii. 12. *(x)* Deut. viii. 2. *(y)* Exod. xix. 13.

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as, had there been any Fallacy in the *Phænomenon*, *Moſes* wou'd have debarr'd them from going up for ever. And therefore, as we need not doubt but that ſeveral, upon this Signal, went up; we cannot but think, that the Cheat wou'd have ſoon been diſcover'd, had there been any Marks of a *natural Irruption* of Fire diſcernable upon the Top of the Mountain.

THOSE, who give us an Account of *Vulcanos*, or burning Mountains, do all agree in this, (as the Nature of the Thing indeed ſeems to require it *(z)* that, on their Tops they have always an open *Mouth*, which the Antients call'd *Crater)* thro' which they belch out their Flames; and that, after the Fire is expended, it will ſtill appear in the Form of a monſtrous *Gap*, even unto the End of the World. And therefore, ſince all *Travellers*, both antient and modern, who have taken an accurate Survey * of the Mount *Sinai*, cou'd never diſcern the leaſt Appearance of any ſuch Gap, but, on the contrary, a continued Surface, whereon there ſtands, at preſent, a little Chapel of St *Catharine*; all this ſuppos'd Contrivance of *Moſes*, to make a natural *Vulcano* paſs upon the People for the *majeſtick Preſence* of God upon the ſacred Mount, can be deem'd no other than a crude, nonſenſical Fiction, wherein the Lovers of Infidelity are found to ſhew their Ignorance as well as their Malice, when they pretend to tax this Relation of *Moſes*, repreſenting God's Appearance in a Flame of Fire, in Thunder, and Lightning, *&c.* with any Incongruity, or invent any groundleſs Stories to account for it; ſince Nothing can be more agreeable to the antient *Divinity*, or common Notions of the *Heathen* World, * than that the Apparition of their Gods, whenever they deſcend upon the Earth, is uſually attended with ſuch like Harbingers.

From Exod. xiii to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

SUNDRY *Law-givers*, no doubt, have pretended to a *Familiarity* with their reſpective Deities, as well as *Moſes* did with the God of *Iſrael*; but, (beſides the Atteſtation of *Miracles* in his Favour, which

No Incongruity in theſe Laws.

(z) Nicholls's Conference, Part II. p. 279.

* The Mountains of *Sinai* and *Horeb* are promiſcuouſly us'd by the ſacred *Hiſtorian*, by Reaſon of their Contiguity; and yet it is certain, that they are two different Places. *Sinai*, (which the *Arabians*, at this Day, call *Tor*, or the *Mountain*, by way of Eminence, or otherwiſe *Gibel Mouſa*, the *Mount of* Moſes) ſtands in a Kind of *Peninſula*, form'd by two Arms of the *Red Sea*, one of which ſtretches out towards the *North*, and is call'd the *Gulph of Kolſom*; the other towards the *Eaſt*, and is call'd the Gulph of *Elan*, or the *Elanitiſh Sea*. *Sinai* is, at leaſt, one third Part higher than *Horeb*, and of a much more difficult Aſcent; whoſe Top terminates in an uneven and rugged Space, capable of containing about 60 Perſons. Here (as we ſaid) is built the little Chapel of St *Catharine*, where it is thought that the Body of this Saint reſted for 330 Years, but was afterwards remov'd to the Church, which is at the Foot of the Mountain. Not far from the Chapel iſſues out a Fountain of good freſh Water, which is look'd upon as miraculous, becauſe it is not conceivable, how Water can riſe from the Brow of ſo high a Mountain. *Horeb* is to the *Weſt* of *Sinai*, ſo that at Sun-riſing the Shadow of *Sinai* entirely covers *Horeb*. At the Foot of this Mount there is a Fountain, which ſupplies Water to the Monaſtery of St *Catharine*; and about five or ſix Paces from it, they ſhew us a *Stone*, about four or five Feet high, and three broad, which, as they tell us, is the very ſame, from whence *Moſes* caus'd the Waters to guſh out. It is of a ſpotted grey Colour, ſtands by itſelf, as it were, and where no other Rock appears, and has twelve Holes about a foot wide, from whence it is thought that the Water came forth, which the *Iſraelites* did drink. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Sinai*.

* That Fire and Lightning ſhou'd attend the Preſence of God, is a Notion ſo frequent in the moſt antient and oriental *Theology*, that it might poſſibly give occaſion to the Worſhip of *Fire* among the *Chaldeans* and *Perſians*; to the *Magi*, among the *Cappadocians*, call'd *Purrethi*, which *Strabo* mentions; and to the *Veſtal* Fires among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, as well as ancient *Britons*.

Ἦιξα βλέψης μορφῆς ἄτερ ἰυιερὸν πῦρ
Δαμπόμενον σκιρτηδὸν ὅλῃ καλὰ βένθεα Κόσμῳ
Κλῦθι πυρὸς φυτήν.

Say the *Chaldaick* Oracles: And as for *Earth quakes*, or Shaking of Mountains, this is no more, than what all Nations ſuppoſe have ever come to paſs, upon God's manifeſting himſelf at any Time; for it is not only the *Pſalmiſt*, who tells us, that the *Earth ſhook, and the Heaven dropped at the Preſence of God*; but in the Deſcription, which *Virgil* gives us of the Approach of *Phœbus*, he does, in a Manner, tranſlate the Words of *Moſes*:

——— Tremere omnia viſa repente,
Luminaque, Lauruſque Dei; totuſque moveri
Mons circum, & mugire Adytis Cortina reclufis.

Vide *Nicholls*'s Conference, Part II.

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which none of them laid any Claim to) we may venture to put his Character upon this Iſſue, *viz.* the Excellency of his Laws, above what *Athens*, or *Lacedemon*, or even *Rome* itſelf ever had to produce. For, what a compleat Syſtem of all religious and ſocial Virtues do the *Ten Commandments*, deliver'd on the Mount, contain, taking them (as we ought to do) in their *poſitive*, as well as *negative* Senſe! In the *ſecond* of theſe indeed, there is a Paſſage of *God's viſiting the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children*, which ſeems to bear a little hard upon his Mercy and Juſtice; but this is entirely owing to the Miſtake of our Tranſlation. For, if the Prepoſition *Lamed*, and *Hal*, which we there render *upon*, may, *(a)* according to the Senſe of ſome *Criticks*, be render'd *by*, or *in favour of*, then may the Words, now under Conſideration, be properly tranſlated, *God's puniſhing the Wickedneſs of the Father*, BY or IN FAVOUR *of the Children*. In the former of theſe Senſes, *(b) David*'s Murther and Adultery was juſtly puniſh'd *by* his favourite, but wicked Son *Abſalom*; and, in the latter, the meaning will be, that God frequently inflicts remarkable Judgments upon a wicked Father, in order to deter his Children, even to the *third and fourth Generation*, from the like Provocations.

Nor in the Appointment of Cities of Refuge.

WHAT more *juſt*, as well as *merciful* Conſtitution cou'd there be devis'd, than to ordain *Cities of Refuge*, for the innocent *Man-ſlayer* to fly to, thereby to avoid the Rage and ungovernable Fury of the dead Man's *Relations*, (who, according to the Cuſtom of theſe Times, were wont immediately to revenge their Kindred's Death) and thereby to gain Time to prepare a Plea in his own Vindication; which, if it was found inſufficient, and the Man adjudg'd guilty of *wilful Murther*, cou'd not according to the Tenor of the ſame Law, ſecure him from being dragg'd even *(c) from the Horns of the Altar?*

AN Eye for an Eye, and a Tooth for a Tooth, may ſeem to us, who live under a milder Diſpenſation, a rigid and ſevere Decree; but then we may obſerve, that it was no more, than what was thought reaſonable in other Nations, and obtain'd a Place among * the celebrated *Roman* Laws of the *twelve Tables*. It was, in ſome Meaſure, neceſſary to reſtrain quarrelſome and unruly Tempers from Violence; and, in Caſe that Death did not enſue, the Law was always mitigated, and the *Talio* commuted for a *pecuniary* Mulct. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Valid Reaſons for ſeemingly frivolous Laws.

SEVERAL of the *Jewiſh* Laws, which to us may ſeem frivolous, had a valid Reaſon for their Inſtitution at firſt, if it were but to diſcriminate them from other Nations, and to guard them againſt the common Infection of Idolatry. The Wearing of *Linſey-woolſey* was probably a proud, fantaſtical Faſhion of the *Heathens* at that Time, which the *Jews* were forbid to imitate. An *Ox* and an *Aſs* were not to be coupled together in the ſame Carriage, with this merciful Intent, that one Beaſt of *greater* Strength might not ſtrain a poor Creature of *leſs* beyond its Ability; and, as Sowing the Ground with *mix'd Seeds*, in ſome Mens Opinion, is an effectual Way to wear it out, it was therefore a Practice prohibited, in Commiſeration (if I may ſo ſay to *our Mother Earth*, as well as to ſet Bounds to the Huſband-man's Covetouſneſs; though, as others imagine, theſe three Injunctions, as they ſtand all together in the ſame Place, might perhaps have ſomething *emblematical in them*, beſides the Precept, to make Men have a greater Abhorrence of all *venereal* Mixtures contrary to Nature.

No Reſemblance between the Egyptian *and* Jewiſh *Ceremonies.*

IT is an Injunction, which God often inculcates to his People the *Jews*, *(d) After the Doing of the Land of* Egypt, *wherein ye dwelt, ye ſhall not do*; *and after the Doing of the Land of* Canaan, *whither I bring you, ye ſhall not do: I am the Lord your*

(a) Le Clerc's Commentary in Locum. *(b)* 2 Sam. xi. and ſome following Chapters. *(c)* Exod. xxi. 14.

* *Aulus Gellius* ſets down this Law of the *twelve Tables* in this Manner. SI MEMBRUM RUPERIT. NI. CUM. EO. PACIT. TALIO. ESTO. *Noct. Attic.* Lib. xx. c. 1.

(d) Lev. xviii. 3, 4.

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your God, ye ſhall therefore keep my Statutes, and my Judgments; which Words ſeem to imply, not only that the idolatrous Rites of the *Gentiles* were forbidden, but that *thoſe* of God's Appointment were made in direct Oppoſition to them: And to this Purpoſe we find *(e)* the *Roman* Hiſtorian repreſenting the *Jews*, as *a People whoſe religious Rites were ſo contrary to all the World beſides, that what, in others, was moſt ſacred, they accounted profane, and allow'd, as lawful, what other Nations were wont to abominate.*

NOW, if the *Moſaick* Laws and Ceremonies were given to the *Jews*, as Barriers againſt Idolatry, and formerly repugnant to the Cuſtoms of the *Heathens*, we may appeal to any ſober and conſiderate Man, whether it be conſiſtent with good Senſe, or congruous to Truth and Reaſon, that God ſhou'd make Laws, exactly contrary to the *Egyptians*, and other *Pagan* Nations, ſhewing thereby, that he hated the very Semblance of their Rites, and yet, at the ſame Time, take the *Riſe* of his Inſtitutions from the Cuſtoms and Practice of theſe *Pagans:* Nay, whether it gives us not ſuch an Idea of God, as Reverence to his tremendous Majeſty will not ſuffer me to name, *(f)* to repreſent him making up all the vain, ludicrous, ſuperſtitious, impious, impure, idolatrous, magical, and diabolical Cuſtoms, which had been firſt invented, and afterwards practis'd, by the moſt barbarous Nations, and out of theſe patching up a great Part of the Religion, which he appointed his own People.

IT cannot well otherwiſe be, but that, in Matters of *Tradition*, which have equally deſcended among all Nations perhaps from *Noah*, a Man of ſome Learning and Fancy may form a Similitude between the religious *Rites* and *Uſages* of one People with another; but it wou'd really rack one's Invention to find out the great Agreement between the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt, and the *Egyptian* Chief Juſtice; ſince the *Urim* and *Thummim* of the one was a *Piece of Cloth*, about a Span ſquare, beſet with Jewels, but the *Alathea*, (as they call it) of the other, was a *golden Medal*, repreſenting the Figure of a Bird; ſince the Robe of the one was made of ſcarlet blue, and purple woollen Cloth, only embroider'd with Wreaths of fine Linnen; but the Garment of the other was made of Linnen only, becauſe it was unlawful, *(g)* as *Herodotus* tells us, for the *Egyptian* Magiſtrates to wear any Thing elſe.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

WHEN the *Tables of the Covenant* were deliver'd to *Moſes*, it ſeems no more than requiſite, that ſome Care ſhou'd be taken of them; and if ſo, what cou'd be a more appoſite Contrivance for that Purpoſe than a *Cheſt? Moſes*, even by his Enemies, is reputed a very cunning Man; but they certainly mean it as a Compliment, and not his Due, if they think him not capable of ſo ſmall a Contrivance as this, without copying from the *Egyptian Ciſta*, wherein the Prieſts were wont to lock up their religious *Trinkets* from the Eyes of the Vulgar: And as for the *Cherubims*, which over-ſhadow'd this *Ark*, there certainly ſeems nothing *analogous*, but rather a particular Oppoſition in theſe to the *Egyptian* Idolatry. For, whereas their Temples were generally fill'd with the Images of Monkeys, Calves, and Serpents, the Repreſentations of real Animals, which, (according to the natural *Deiſm* of thoſe Times) they fancy'd to be Parts and Exhibitions of the Deity; *Moſes* here † orders Figures to be made, which had little or no Reſemblance of any Thing in the World, and were expreſſive of the *angelical* Nature only, which every one knew was *ſubordinate* to God's. So little Congruity is there to be

(e) Tacitus, l. viii. c. 4. *(f) Edwards*'s Survey of Religion, Vol. I. *(g)* Lib. ii. c. 37.

† What the particular Figure of theſe *Cherubims* was, it is hard to imagine at this Diſtance. *Grotius* indeed, and ſome others, have ingeniouſly conjectur'd, from the Creatures ſeen by *Ezekiel* in his Viſion, *Chap.* i. 5. and x. 15 which he calls *Cherubim*, that they had the Face of a *Man*, the Wings of an *Eagle*, the Mane of a *Lion*, and the Feet of an *Ox*; and by this they will have the Diſpenſations of divine Providence, by the Miniſtry of Angels, *ſymbolically* repreſented; the *Lion*, exhibiting the Severity of his *Juſtice*; the *Eagle*, the Celerity of his *Bounty*; the *Man*, his *Goodneſs* and *Mercy*; and the *Ox*, the Slowneſs of his *Puniſhment*, which comes (as the *Greek* Proverb ſays) ὀνου ποδὸς, with an *Ox's Foot*. *Nicholls*'s Conference, Part II.

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found between the *Egyptian* and *Jewiſh* Laws and Ceremonies, * leſs perhaps, than might be diſcover'd in ſeveral other Nations, were we diſpos'd to be prolix upon this Subject. But let us return to their *Legiſlator*.

Moſes's Expreſſion concerning God vindicated.

That God, who is a pure Spirit, eternal, and omnipreſent, has neither Body nor Parts, nor any Affections thereunto belonging, is a Propoſition, which our Reaſon cannot but aſſent to; and yet, when we ſet ourſelves to *explain* (as we call it) the Divine Nature and Attributes, we ſoon find ourſelves under a Neceſſity to borrow Expreſſions from *corporeal* Beings, the better to accommodate the Loftineſs of our Subject to our Readers Comprehenſion. For, unleſs we cou'd contrive a perfect Set of *new* Words, there is no ſpeaking at all of the Deity without uſing our *old* ones in a *tralatitious* Senſe. *Providence* and *Mercy*, for Inſtance, are two known Attributes of God; but, if we reſpect their *original* Uſe, and do not take them in a *metaphorical* Meaning, they are altogether as abſurd, when apply'd to God, as are his *Eye*, or *Hand*, or *Back-parts*, in their groſſeſt Senſe. For, how improper is it, literally ſpeaking, to ſay, that God *looks before him*, like Men when they act cautiouſly; or, that he has that *relenting of Heart*, or *yearning of Bowels*, which merciful Men feel at the Sight of a miſerable Object? The Truth is, Languages were compos'd to maintain an Intercourſe with one another, and not to treat of the Nature of that Being, who *dwelleth in Light that is inacceſſible*. No Form of Words, be they never ſo exquiſite and well choſen, can reach thoſe tranſcendent Perfections, that are *unutterable*; and therefore, if we conſider the low Capacity of the People, to whom, the great Poverty of the Language, in which, and the vaſt Sublimity of the Subject, about which, *Moſes* wrote, we ſhall have leſs Occaſion to blame this *metaphorical* Way of expreſſing the Divine Nature, which, upon Experiment, he certainly found beſt adapted, both to inform the Underſtanding, and animate the Affections of the People; while a Number of dry, *ſcholaſtick*, and abſtracted Terms wou'd have laid flat upon their Minds, and ſerv'd only to amuſe and confound them. From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Tho', therefore, it muſt be acknowledg'd, that there is indeed an Impropriety in Language, when corporeal Parts, or Actions are imputed to the Diety; yet ſince the Narrowneſs of the *Hebrew* Tongue wou'd not furniſh *Moſes* with a Sufficiency of abſtract Terms, and the Dullneſs of the People (had he had a Sufficiency) would not have permitted him to employ them; he was under a Neceſſity of ſpeaking according to the *common Uſage*, which was ſecur'd from giving the People any groſs Ideas of God, becauſe theſe Phraſes were always underſtood to be ſpoken ἀνθρωποπαθῶς; and therefore *(h)* a *Jewiſh Rabbin* acquaints us, that when ever they meet with an Expreſſion concerning the Deity of this Nature, they are us'd to interpoſe a *Cabiacal*, or, *If I may ſo ſpeak*.

Interpreters, indeed, are at ſome Variance what we are to underſtand by the *Hand*, *Face*, and *Hinder-Parts* of God. "The *Face of God*, *(i) ſays an* "*ingenious Gloſſary*, ſignifies his Eſſence, "before the Beginning of the World, "and his *Hinder-Parts*, his Creation and "Providence, in the Government of "the World:" But *(k) Maimonides* is of Opinion, that theſe Words may be interpreted

* To this Purpoſe, we are inform'd that the *Brachmans*, the *Indian* Prieſts, wear Bells about them like the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt, were only allow'd to go into the inward Part of the Temple, and were, like him, oblig'd to marry Virgins. *Slaves* there have their Ears bor'd through; a perpetual *Light* is kept in their Temples, and *Cakes* are ſet before their Idols, like *Shew Bread*. Nay, even the barbarous *Tartars* have many Things not unlike the *Jews*, for they celebrate their New Moons with Songs and Compotations; they bewail their Dead 30 Days: they breed no Hogs, and puniſh Adultery with Death. The like may be ſaid of the People of the New World. Thoſe of *Jucatan* are circumcis'd; thoſe of *Mexico* keep a perpetual Fire in their Temples; and the *Charibeans* celebrate the New Moon with the Sound of a Trumpet, and abſtain from Swine's Fleſh: And therefore, if a Similitude in Ceremonies is admitted as a valid Argument, we may as well ſay, that the *Jews* had their Laws and religious Ordinances from any of *theſe*, as that they had them from the *Egyptians*. *Nichols*'s Conference, Part II.

(b) Quoted by *Hottinger* in his Diſſert. Theolog. Philol. Part I. 2, 21. *(i) Elias* Cretenſis. *(k) More Nevoch*,

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preted according to the *Targum*, *viz.* That God made his *Majeſty*, i. e, an exceedingly bright Repreſentation of himſelf, (though not in its full Glory) paſs before *Moſes*, in ſo much Splendor, as human Nature cou'd bear, which may be term'd his *Back-Parts*: but not in his unveil'd *Brightneſs*, which may ſignify his *Face*, and, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) is *inacceſſible*; and *(l)* the *Hand*, wherewith God *cover'd* him, while he *paſſed by*, may probably denote a *Cloud* which God caſt about him, that he might not be ſtruck dead by the inconceivable Force and Refulgency of thoſe Rays, which came from the *Face*, or full Luſtre of the divine Majeſty.

IN this Senſe the antient *Jews* cou'd not but underſtand their Legiſlator, when they found him conveying ſublime Truths under outward and ſenſible Repreſentations. For, to clear him from all unjuſt Imputation, we need but call to mind the glorious Deſcriptions he gives, almoſt every where, but eſpecially in *Deuteronomy*, of the Deity, and what Pains he takes, to deter them from making any Repreſentation of it, under any Form whatever, by reminding them, that when God was pleas'd to diſplay his Glory upon Mount *Sinai*, at the Delivering of the Ten Commandments, they ſaw no Shape or Likeneſs, but only heard his dreadful Voice. *(m)* Theſe ſo frequent Inculcations may therefore be look'd upon as ſo many Intimations given them, in what Senſe they were to underſtand all thoſe other Expreſſions, which he had been forc'd to accommodate to their Capacity, *i. e.* not in a *literal*, but in ſuch a one, as was becoming the Deity, and ſuitable to the Dignity of the Subject.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

And concerning himſelf, juſtify'd.

MOSES, no doubt, was a good Governor, and zealouſly affected for the Welfare of his People; but we injure his Memory much, if we think him, either ſo ignorant of a future State, or ſo negligent of his own Salvation, as to wiſh himſelf *damn'd*, in his Deprecation of God's Judgments, for their Salvation. The Caſe is this:——The *Iſraelites*, in making a golden Calf to worſhip, had highly offended God: God renounces all Relation to them, and, in his Diſpleaſure, threatens, either to abandon, or deſtroy them; whereupon *Moſes* interceeds for their Pardon, and, among other Motives, makes uſe of this *(n) Oh*, my God, *this People have ſinned a great Sin, and have made them Gods of Gold; yet now, if thou wilt, forgive their Sins; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of the Book which thou haſt written: (o)* Not that God ſtands in need of a Book, wherein to regiſter or record any of his Purpoſes: * but the Scripture makes uſe of this Form of Expreſſion, in Alluſion to the Cuſtom of numbering the People, and ſetting down their Names in a Scroll or Regiſter, *(p)* as *Moſes* did, at their coming out of the Land of *Egypt*. The ſame Method was likewiſe obſerv'd at the Return from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, as may be ſeen in the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; and thoſe, who were inroll'd in this *B*ook, are ſaid, *(q) to be written for Life*, or *among the Living*, becauſe,

(l) *Patrick*'s Commentary, on Exod. xxxiii. *(m)* Univerſal Hiſt. Lib. i. c. 7. *(n)* Exod. xxxii. 32.
(o) *Patrick*'s Commentary in Locum.

* To this Purpoſe the Royal *Pſalmiſt*, in Relation to his own Formation in the Womb, beſpeaks God, and ſays, *Thine Eyes did ſee my Subſtance, yet being imperfect, and in thy Book were all my Members written*; as if God kept a Catalogue of the Children that were born, *Pſal.* cxxxix. 16. And again, ſpeaking of wicked Men he ſays, *let them be wiped out of the Book of the Living, and not be written among the Righteous*, Pſal. lxix. 28. Nor is this Form of Speech to be found only among *ſacred* Writers, but even *Plautus* himſelf, having occaſion in one of his *Prologues*, to take ſome Notice of the divine Providence, makes uſe of theſe Words:

Qui falſas Lites falſis Teſtimoniis
Petunt, quique in Jure abjurant pecuniam,
Eorum referimus *nomina exſcripta* ad Jovem.
Quotidie ille ſcit, quis hic quærit malum,
Qui hic litem apiſci poſtulent Injuriâ
Mali, Res falſas qui impetrant apud Judicem
Bonos in *aliis Tabulis exſcriptos* habet. *Le Clerc*'s Comment. ad Exod. c. xxxii.

(p) Numb. i. *(q)* Iſaiah iv. 3.

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becauſe, every Year, they blotted out of this *Catalogue* the Names of thoſe that were dead.

ACCORDING to this Conſtruction of the Phraſe, (and this is certainly the true Conſtruction) *Moſes* can by no Means be ſuppos'd to wiſh his own Damnation, which wou'd look like an *enthuſiaſtick* Rant, rather than divine Inſpiration; which wou'd be impious for him to aſk, and unrighteous for God to do; but only that, "rather than live to ſee the Cala-"mities, which wou'd befal the People, "in Caſe God ſhou'd either defert or "deſtroy them, he deſires to be diſ-"charg'd from Life, that ſo he may eſ-"cape the Shock of ſo woeful, ſo terrible "a Spectacle.

IN a former Communion with God, wherein he threatens either to extripate or diſinherit his People, he promiſes *Moſes* to *(r) make of him a greater Nation, and mightier than they*; but inſtead of that, *Moſes* here deſires to die with them; and, as a learned Father of the Church obſerves, "*(s)* there is a great deal of pious "Art and Policy in the Petition, or Pro-"poſal (as we may call it) which this great "Favourite and Confident of God offers "to him. He does not make it at all "Adventures, as one leſs acquainted with "the divine Mind might do; nor does "he make it out of a Slight and Contempt "of Life, as one whoſe Circumſtances "had brought him into Deſpair might "do. He knew God's Goodneſs was in-"finite, as well as his Juſtice; ſo that, "in this Alternative, *either be thou plea-"ſed to ſlay me and them together, or to "ſpare them and me together*, he was "ſenſible he ſhou'd engage God's Mer-"cy to pardon the *Criminals*, whilſt, on "their Behalf, he *devoted* himſelf at the "ſame Time to that Juſtice, which can-"not be ſuppos'd capable of hurting the "*Innocent*." From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

ONE great Commendation, which we have frequently remark'd of the Author of the *Pentateuch* above any other Hiſtorian, is, that he conſults *Truth*, more than *Plauſibility* in his Narrations, and conceals no material Point, even though it tends to the Diſhonour of the People, whoſe Actions he is recording. *Joſephus* wrote the *Jewiſh* Hiſtory of theſe Times, as well as *Moſes*; and yet, when he comes to the proper Period, he quite conceals their blind Idolatry in Worſhipping the *golden Calf*: Whereas *Moſes* relates it in all its aggravating Circumſtances, and ſeems to fix, in a Manner, the whole Odium of it upon his Brother *Aaron*. And therefore to inform ourſelves how far *Aaron* was culpable in this Particular, we muſt attend a little to the probable Occaſion of it.

How Aaron was induc'd to make the People an Idol.

WHILE *Moſes* was gone up into the Mount, he appointed *Aaron* and *Hur* to be the Rulers of the People in his Abſence; but, as his Abſence prov'd longer than was expected, the People began to be uneaſy. They ſaw *the Glory of the Lord, which was like a devouring Fire on the Top of the Mount*, and thereupon they concluded that *Moſes*, who tarry'd ſo long, was certainly deſtroy'd in the Flames. They ſaw too, that the *Pillar of the Cloud*, which us'd to conduct them in their Marches, was gone, and in no Likelihood of returning again; and hereupon, having loſt their *Guide*, and the viſible Token of God's Preſence among them, they came unto *Aaron*, and, in a tumultuous Manner, demanded of him to make them another Repreſentation of the Divine Preſence, in the Room of what was departed from them. *(t) Up*, ſay they, and make us Gods (or as the *Hebrew* Text will bear †) *make us a God which ſhall go before us. (u)* Not

(r) Numb. xiv. 12. *(s)* Paulin. Epiſt. xxi. *(t)* Exod. xxxii. 1.

† It has been argu'd by ſome learned Men, that the *Iſraelites* intended here to fall entirely into the *Egyptian* Religion, and that the Deity, they made the Calf to, was ſome God of the *Egyptians*; but to me this ſeems not to be the Fact. In this Calf, the *Iſraelites* evidently deſign'd to worſhip the God, who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*, and accordingly their Faſt was proclaim'd not to any *Egyptian* Deity, but to the Lord, to JEHOVAH, their own God, *Exod.* xxxii. 4. So that their Idolatry conſiſted not in really worſhipping a falſe Diety, but in making an Image to the true and living God, which the Second Commandment expreſsly did forbid. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. 11.

(u) Saurin's Diſſertations.

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Not that they were ſo ſtupid, as to imagine, that the true God cou'd be made by any Man, or that any Image cou'd be a Means of conducting them, either forward into *Canaan*, or back again into *Egypt*; but what they wanted, was ſome outward Object to ſupply the Want of the *Cloud*, by being a Type and Symbol of the Deity, and where they might depoſe the Homage which they intended to pay to the ſupreme God; for ſo ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors have expounded the Text of *Moſes*: *(x) They deſired a ſenſible Object of divine Worſhip to be ſet before them, not with an Intention to deny God, who brought them out of* Egypt, *but that Something, in the Place of God, might ſtand before them, when they declared his wonderful Works.*

THE Commandment againſt making Images had ſo lately, in ſo terrible a Manner, been enjoin'd by God himſelf, that, though ſome Reaſon may be given why the Children of *Iſrael* were ſo forward to make the Demand, yet none can be imagin'd, why *Aaron* ſhou'd comply with it, without making any Remonſtrance, and yet we meet with no Refuſal recorded by *Moſes*. All that we have in Extenuation of *Aaron*'s Fault, is from the Suggeſtion of the *Rabbins*, who pretend that his Compliance proceeded from his Fear; that the People had † murther'd *Hur* the other *Deputy*, for oppoſing their Deſire; that, to diſcourage them from purſuing their Deſign, *Aaron* demanded all their *golden Ear-rings*, in hopes that they wou'd not inſiſt upon having an *Idol*, which wou'd coſt them ſo dear; but that, when Nothing wou'd avail, he took their Gold, and caſt it into the Fire, and contrary to his Intention, by ſome *magical* or *diabolical* Art, there immediately came out a *Calf*, which much increas'd the People's Superſtition. But this, and Abundance more of the like Nature, ſeem to be Conceits, invented for the Excuſe of *Aaron*, who is plainly enough ſaid to have *(y) made this molten Calf*, which he cou'd not have done without deſigning it, and running the Gold into a Mould of that Figure.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

THE Word, which we here render *Calf (z)* does, in other Places of Scripture, ſignify an *Ox*: And, as an Ox's Head was, in ſome Countries, an Emblem of Strength, and the Horns a common Sign of kingly Power; ſo *(a)* a learned *Prelate*, out of a Deſire to apologize for *Aaron*, is willing to inſinuate, that his Deſign, in making an *Ox* the Symbol of the divine Preſence, was to remind the *Iſraelites* of the Power of God, and to expreſs the great Tokens, which they had ſeen of it, in their wonderful Deliverance. But how ingenious ſoever this *Hypotheſis* may be, it wants this Foundation for its Support, that this *Hieroglyphic* of the divine Power was not in Uſe in the Time of *Moſes*; for, if it was, we cannot imagine, why *Aaron*, when call'd to an Account by his Brother, ſhou'd forget to plead it in Excuſe for himſelf; or why God ſhou'd be ſo highly incens'd againſt him, had his Deſign been only to exhibit a *Symbol* of the divine Power and Authority to a People of too groſs Sentiments, without ſuch a viſible Repreſentation, ever to comprehend it.

And why it was a Calf.

ANOTHER learned *Prelate* of our own, *(b)* equally inclin'd to excuſe this Action of *Aaron*, ſuppoſes that he took his Pattern from Part of what he ſaw on the holy Mount, when the *Shechinah* of God came down upon it, attended with Angels,

(x) R. Jehudah, in Lib. *Cozri*, Part I. S. 97.

† What Authority they had for theſe Aſſertions, I cannot ſay; but, if what they offer be true, this does not at all prove *Aaron* to be innocent; becauſe no Obſtinacy of the People cou'd have forc'd him without his own Fault, and he ſhou'd have been willing, and adventur'd to die, rather than, by a timorous Compliance, have made himſelf Partaker of their Sins.

Juſtum & tenacem propoſiti virum,
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus inſtantis Tyranni
Mente quatit ſolidâ, &c. HOR. Car. Lib. III. Od. iii.

(y) Exod. xxxii. 35. *(z)* Pſal. cvi. 20. *(a) Patrick* in his Comment. in Locum. *(b) Tenniſon* of Idolatry, c. 6.

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ſome of which were *Cherubims*, or Angels appearing in the Form of Oxen: But this Opinion is inconſiſtent with the great Care, which was taken on Mount *Sinai*, not to furniſh any Pretext for Idolatry, and the Caution which *Moſes* gives the People to that Purpoſe. *(c) Take ye therefore good Heed to yourſelves (for ye ſaw no Manner of Similitude, on the Day that the Lord ſpake unto you in* Horeb, *out of the Midſt of the Fire) leſt ye corrupt yourſelves, and make you a graven Image, the Similitude of any Figure, the Likeneſs of any Male or Female, the Likeneſs of any Beaſt that is on the Earth; the Likeneſs of any winged Fowl, that flieth in the Air; the Likeneſs of any Thing that creepeth on the Ground; the Likeneſs of any Fiſh,* &c. where the Holy Spirit enumerates Animals of all Kinds, and poſitively aſſures us, that none of their Forms or Figures appear upon the Mount.

The moſt common therefore, and indeed the moſt probable Opinion is, that *Aaron* made Choice of the Figure of an *Ox*, or *Calf*, in Compliance to the Prejudice of the *People*, and becauſe that Creature was worſhipp'd in *Egypt*. That the *Iſraelites* were ſorely infected with the Idolatry of the *Egyptians*, we have many plain Proofs *(d)* from Scripture to convince us; that all Sorts of Animals were worſhipp'd by the *Egyptians*, and, among the *Terreſtrial*, more eſpecially the Ox, is what *(e)* the ſeveral Authors, who have treated of the Affairs of *Egypt*, do abundantly teſtify; and that the Idolatry of *Animals*, and more eſpecially of the *Ox*, was eſtabliſh'd in *Egypt*, during the Sojourning of the *Iſraelites* in that Land, is more than probable from theſe Words of *Moſes* to *Pharaoh*; *(f) if we ſacrifice the Abomination of the* Egyptians *before their Eyes*, i. e. if we ſacrifice to our God Oxen, Sheep, and Goats, which the *Egyptians* worſhip and adore, and conſequently make an Abomination to the Lord, *will they not ſtone us?* So that it ſeems moſt rational to ſuppoſe, that this Image was made in Compliance to the giddy Humour of the People, who, upon the ſuppos'd Death of *Moſes*, were probably all for returning back again, and, in Imitation of the *Egyptians*, who worſhipp'd their Idol *Apis*, or *Serapis*, not only in a *living Ox*, but in an Image made after the Similitude of an Ox, bethought themſelves of the like Repreſentation of a Deity to go before them: The only Queſtion is, whether the Worſhip of the *Egyptian Apis* was *prior* to the Formation of this *golden Calf*, which happens to be a Point, wherein *(g)* the Learned are not ſo well agreed.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Thus we have endeavour'd to give a full Anſwer to ſeveral Objections, which have been rais'd againſt the ſacred Hiſtorian during the Period, which is at preſent under Conſideration: And, for a farther Confirmation hereof, we might now produce ſome foreign Teſtimonies and Traditions concerning the Truth and Veracity of his Narrations. That the miraculous Pillar, *for Inſtance*, which conducted the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, very probably gave Riſe to the antient Fables, *(h)* how *Hercules* and *Bacchus* (who, under different Shapes, are both ſuppos'd to denote *Moſes)* ſet up *Pillars*, in Teſtimony of their Travels and Expeditions: That the *Iſraelites* ſafe Paſſage over the *Red-Sea*, upon its being divided by the Rod of *Moſes*, and the Tradition, which the People of *Memphis* have thereupon, are related by *Antapanus*, as he is quoted *(i)* by *Euſebius*: That, upon the Return and Conflux of the Waters, the Armies, which purſu'd them, were ſwallow'd up in the Deep, is mention'd *(k)* by *Diodorus*, as a current Story among the People inhabiting the *weſtern* Coaſt of the *Red-Sea*: That on this Coaſt there are ſeveral Lakes and Springs of a ſalt and brackiſh Taſte, in the Manner that *Moſes* has recorded, and no ſuch

All this confirm'd by Heathen Teſtimony.

(c) Deut. iv. 15, &c. *(d)* Vid. Joſh xxiv. 14. Ezek. xx. 7, 8. and Chap. xxii. 3, 8. *(e)* Vid. *Strabo*, Lib. 17. de Ægyptiacis Templis. Herod. Lib. 2. Diod. Lib. 1. & Plutar. de Iſide & Oſiride. *(f)* Exod. viii. 26. *(g)* Vid. *Ger. Voſ.* de Idolat. c. 9. *Bochart.* Hieroſ. Part I. Lib. 2. and *Tenniſon* of Idolatry. *(h)* *Huetius*, Quæſt. Alnet. Lib. 2. *(i)* Præpar. Evang. Lib. 9. *(k)* Lib. 3. p. 174.

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ſuch Thing found on the other Side of the Sea, is teſtify'd *(l)* by *Oroſius*, as well as ſeveral antient Geographers: That God's ſending down *Manna*, for Bread, to the *Iſraelites*, and great Plenty of *Quails*, for Meat, is mention'd by *Antipanus*, as he is cited again *(m)* by *Euſebius:* That, from *Moſes*'s ſtriking the Rock with his Rod, the Fable of *Bacchus*'s doing the ſame with his *Tyrſus*, in order to extract Water for the Relief of the Virgin *Aura*, had its Original: And (to name no more) that, from *Moſes*'s receiving the Law on Mount *Sinai*, moſt of the Lawgivers of other Nations took the Hint to borrow their Inſtitutions from ſome God, or Goddeſs, or other; *Minos*, from *Jupiter*; *Lycurgus*, from *Apollo*; *Zeleucus*, from *Minerva*; *Numa*, from *Egeria*; &c. ſo well was the World perſuaded of the Truth and Authority of the *Jewiſh* Legiſlator, when they ſeem'd to agree in this: ——That even a diſtant Imitation of him was enough to give Sanction to their ſeveral Fictions.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

DISSERTATION I.

Of the ISRAELITES *paſſing the* Red-Sea.

Why this Miracle has been diſputed.

THE Paſſage of the *Iſraelites* thro' the *Red-Sea* is what we have reſerv'd for the Subject of our *Diſſertation*, becauſe it is one of the moſt remarkable Events in this *Period*, if not in the whole *Jewiſh* Hiſtory; and yet has had the Misfortune to meet with more Suggeſtions againſt its *Miraculouſneſs*, than any other, that we find upon Record.

WHAT has contributed to this *Perverſeneſs* may not unlikely be the fond Conceits, which ſome *antient* Doctors, both of the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Church, have been pleas'd to affix to this Miracle: *viz.* That God divided the Sea into *twelve* Paſſages, according to the *twelve Tribes:* That, to facilitate their Paſſage, he pull'd up the Weeds, remov'd huge Stones, levell'd the rugged Places, and made the Sand, at the Bottom, as hard as a Rock: That the Waters, upon being divided, were immediately congeal'd, and ſtood *in Array*, like a Wall of *Glaſs*; and that ſome Fragments of the *Egyptian Chariot-Wheels* may, even to this Day, be ſeen at the Bottom, as far as the Sight can reach. For it is not improbable, that, in Prejudice to theſe extravagant *Fancies*, others have exercis'd all their Wit and Learning to depreciate the Miracle, by aſſerting, —— That there was no more in it (even as *Joſephus* himſelf ſeems to inſinuate) than in *Alexander*'s paſſing the Sea of *Pamphylia*; *(n)* that the *Red-Sea*, eſpecially in the extreme Part of it, where the *Iſraelites* paſs'd, is not above two or three Miles over, and very often dry, by Reaſon of the great Reflux of the Tide; and that *Moſes*, who perfectly underſtood the Country, and had made his Obſervations upon the *Flux* and *Reflux* of the Sea, led down his Men at the Time of *Ebb*, when, being favour'd by a ſtrong Wind blowing from the Shore, he had the good Luck to get ſafe to the other Side; while *Pharaoh*, and his Army, hoping to do the ſame, but miſtaken in their Computation, had the Misfortune to be loſt. And therefore, to give this Matter a fair Hearing, we ſhall firſt endeavour to eſtabliſh the Truth of the *Miracle*, and then examine into the Pretenſions of thoſe, who are willing, either to aſcribe it to *natural Cauſes*, or to *compare* it with other Events (as they ſuppoſe) of the like Nature.

The Reality of it.

WITHOUT entering far into *Moſes*'s Character, we will ſuppoſe him, at preſent, a Man of common Senſe, and who had ſome Honour and Modeſty in him; and yet,

(l) Huetius, Quæſt. Alnet. Lib. 2. tion concerning the Paſſage of the *Red-Sea.*

(m) Præp. Evang. Lib. 9. c. 27.

(n) Vid. *Le Clerc*'s Diſſerta-

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

yet, if he had, we can hardly conceive how he durſt have recorded ſo palpable an Untruth, (ſuppoſing this Paſſage to have nothing *miraculous* in it) when there was ſuch a Multitude of living Witneſſes to confront him; or *(o)* what poſſible Artifice he cou'd uſe to perſuade above two Millions of Perſons, that God, by his Hand, had wrought a ſtupendous Miracle, when they knew, as well as he, that there was no ſuch Thing tranſacted. Among ſuch a contumacious and mutinous Set of People, *Moſes* muſt neceſſarily have made himſelf *ridiculous*, and his Authority *deſpicable*, had he ever once attempted to foiſt ſuch a Fable upon them. And therefore, when we find other Sacred Writers bearing Teſtimony to what he relates, and relating the Matter in the like lofty Expreſſions; when we find the *Royal Pſalmiſt* aſſuring us, that *(p) God, dividing the Sea, made the Waters to ſtand up on an Heap, and cauſed the* Iſraelites *to paſs through*; when we find the Prophet *Iſaiah* demanding, *(q) where is he, that brought them up out of the Sea, that led them by the Right-hand of* Moſes, *by his glorious Arm dividing the Water before him, to make him an everlaſting Name?* when we find the Prophet *Habakkuk* declaring upon this Occaſion, *that (r) the Lord made himſelf a Road to drive his Chariot and Horſes croſs the Sea, a-croſs the Mud of the great Waters*; and when we find the Author *of the Book of Wiſdom* thus recording the Story; *(s) where Water ſtood before, dry Land appeared; out of the* Red-Sea *a Way without Impediment, and out of the violent Stream a green Field, where-through all the People went, that were defended by thy Hand, ſeeing thy marvellous ſtrange Wonders; for they went at large like Horſes, and leaped like Lambs, praiſing thee, O Lord, who hadſt delivered them:* When we find theſe, I ſay, and ſeveral more Writers of great Authority, aſſerting the Wonderfulneſs of this Paſſage (unleſs we can ſuppoſe that they were all combin'd to impoſe upon us) we cannot but aſſent to the Truth of the Fact itſelf, how *poetical* ſoever we may think the Words of that ſacred *Hymn* to be, wherein *Moſes* endeavours to diſplay it: *(t) By the Blaſt of thy Noſtrils the Waters were gathered together, the Flood ſtood upright, as an Heap, and the Depths were congealed in the Heart of the Earth.*

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

In an Event, ſo wonderful, and ſo unaccountable, to human Reaſon, it cannot be expected, but that *Traditions* ſhou'd differ, and Accounts be various: But certainly it is no ſmall Confirmation of the Teſtimony, which the ſacred Writers give us of it, that we find *Antapanus*, in his Hiſtory of the *Jews*, as he is quoted by *(u) Euſebius*, and *(x) Clemens* of *Alexandria*, giving us this Narration of the Matter. "The People of *Memphis* tell us, that "*Moſes*, who was acquainted with all the "Country, knowing the Time when the "Tide wou'd be out, carry'd over all his "Army at low Water: But thoſe of "*Heliopolis* ſay otherwiſe, *viz.* that the "King, following the *Jews*, going away "with what they had borrow'd of the "*Egyptians*, carry'd with him a great "Army; but that *Moſes*, by an Order from "Heaven, ſtruck the Sea with a *Rod*, "whereupon the Waters immediately ſe-"parated, and he led over his Forces in a "dry Tract, but that the *Egyptians*, at-"tempting the ſame Paſſage, were dazzled "by Lightning, and, as the Sea return'd "upon the Paths they were in, were all "deſtroy'd, either by Fire or Water." So that if the joint Teſtimony both of *Friends* or *Foes* can have any Weight with us, we cannot but believe, that this Paſſage of the *Iſraelites*, as it is recorded by *Moſes*, was certainly Matter of Fact, and a Fact ſo very wonderful and miraculous, that Nothing in Hiſtory can ſtand in Competition with it.

Alexander's Paſſage conſider'd.

The Paſſage of *Alexander the Great* over the Sea of *Pamphilia*, bears no Manner

(o) Calmet's Differt. ſur le Paſſag. de la Mer Rouge. *(p)* Pſal. lxxviii. 13. *(q)* Iſa. lxiii. 11, 12. *(r)* Hab. iii. 15. *(s)* Wiſd. xix. 7, &c. *(t)* Exod. xv. 8 *(u)* Præpar. Evang. Lib. 9. c. 27. *(x)* Strom. Lib. 1.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

ner of Reſemblance to this of the *Iſraelites*. *Alexander*, as *(y) Arrian* * and others relate to it, was to march from *Phaſelis*, a Sea-Port, to *Perga* an Inland City of *Pamphylia*. The Country near *Phaſelis*, upon the Shore of the *Pamphylian* Sea, was mountainous and rocky; ſo that he cou'd not find a Paſſage for his Army, without either taking a great Compaſs round the Mountains, or attempting to go over the *Strand*, between the Rocks and the Sea. The Hiſtorian remarks, that there is no paſſing along this Place, unleſs when the Wind blows from the *North*; and therefore *Alexander*, when he came to *Phaſelis*, perceiving that the Wind blew from this Quarter, laid hold of the Opportunity; and, having ſent ſome of his Army over the Mountains, went himſelf with the reſt along the Shore. But now what Miracle was there in all this, unleſs we call the Wind's blowing *opportunely* for *Alexander*'s Purpoſe a Miracle? It is certain, that, according to *(z) Plutarch*'s Account of the Thing, *Alexander* himſelf thought that there was nothing extraordinary in it; and therefore we may juſtly wonder * at *Joſephus*'s comparing this Paſſage with that of the *Iſraelites*, when there is ſo manifeſt a Diſparity between them. The *Iſraelites* croſs'd over a Sea, where no Hiſtorian makes mention of any Perſons, but they, that ever found a Paſſage; whereas *Alexander* only march'd upon the Shore of the Sea of *Pamphylia*, where the ſeveral Hiſtorians, who moſt magnify the divine Providence in protecting him, do all freely allow, that any one may, at any Time, go, when the Tide retreats, and the ſame Wind blows, that favour'd him.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

WHAT the Breadth of the *Red-Sea* may be, at the Place where the *Iſraelites* paſs'd over, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine, * becauſe both *Geographers* and Travellers mightily differ in their Computations. But, if (according to ſome of the loweſt Accounts) we ſuppoſe it to be much about two Leagues, moſt Writers agree, that the Sea, in this Place, is very boiſterous and tempeſtuous, which is hardly conſiſtent with a Shallowneſs, much leſs a total *Deſertion* of Water, upon any haſty *Reflux*. The Wind, it muſt be own'd, if it blew from a right Quarter, might both forward the *Ebb*, and retard the *Flux*; but the Wind, which blew at this

That the Iſraelites *Paſſage was not at* Low-Water.

(y) Exped. Alex. Lib i. *Shuckford*'s Connection. Vol. II. Lib. ix.

* *Strabo* relates the Matter thus: ——— "About *Phaſelis* there are Streights towards the Sea, through which "*Alexander* paſs'd his Army. There is alſo a Mountain, call'd *Climax*, which lyes to the *Pamphylian* Sea, leaving "a ſtreight Paſſage to the Shore, which is quite bare in good Weather; but, when the Waves ariſe, it is, for the "moſt Part, cover'd with them. Now the Road by the Mountain is about, and difficult; and therefore, in calm "Weather, they go by the Shore. But *Alexander* coming thither in ſtormy Weather, and truſting to his Fortune, "wou'd go over before the Waves were abated, which made his Soldiers go all Day up to their Navel in Water, "Lib. 14." And much to the ſame Purpoſe is the Account, which *Plutarch* gives us: "The March through *Pam*-"*phylia*, *ſays he*, has been the Subject to many Hiſtorians of mighty Wonder, and fine Declamation, as if the Sea, "by Order of the Gods, gave Place to *Alexander*, which almoſt always is rough there, and does very rarely open a "ſmooth Paſſage under thoſe broken Rocks. But *Alexander* himſelf, in his *Epiſtles*, ſpeaks of no Miracles, but only "ſays, that he *paſs'd by* Climax, *as he came from* Phaſelis." Vita. Alex. Now, by the joint Authority of theſe two excellent Hiſtorians, this Paſſage is no more than an *ordinary* Thing, but the *Moſaick Tranſit* muſt ſtill remain a Miracle, until we find as good *Hiſtorians* to vouch for a Paſſage over the *Red Sea*. *Nicholls*'s Conference, Part II.

(z) In Alexand. p. 674.

* The Words of *Joſephus* are theſe: ——— "I have been more particular in theſe Relations, becauſe I find them "in Holy Writ; and let no Man think this Story incredible of the Sea's dividing to ſave the *Hebrews*, for we find "it in ancient Records, that This hath been ſeen before, whether by God's extraordinary Will, or by the Courſe of "*Nature*, it is indifferent. The ſame Thing happen'd one Time to the *Macedonians*, under the Command of *Alex*-"*ander*, when, for Want of another Paſſage, the *Pamphylian* Sea divided to make them Way, God's Providence mak-"ing Uſe of *Alexander*, at that Time, as his Inſtrument for deſtroying the *Perſian* Empire." Lib. ii. c. 16. But it is evident, that *Joſephus* was ignorant of the Account of the above-cited Hiſtorians, otherwiſe he wou'd have ſaid nothing of the *Pamphylian* Sea's dividing for the Paſſage of the *Macedonian* Army, when the Matter of Fact was no ſuch Thing.

* One affirms that the Sea is *ſix Leagues* wide, at this Place; another makes it but 15 *Furlongs*; one ſays it is narrow, and long like a River, and another allows it to be the Breadth of one *League*. *Thevenot* makes it *eight* or *nine Miles* in Breadth, but *Andricomius* will have it to be no more than *ſix*. Thoſe however, who are minded to conſult the Authors, who treat of this Subject among many others, may turn to *Diodorus Siculus*, Lib. iii. *Strabo*, Lib. ii. *P. Bellon*'s Obſervat. Lib. ii. *Petro della Valle*, Tom. I. Ep. 11. Voyage de Levant. and Theatrum Terræ Sacræ.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

this Time, we are told, was an *Eaſt-Wind*, whereas it muſt have been a *Weſt*, or *North-weſt* Wind, to have driven the Water, from the Land's-End, into the main Body of the Sea, as any one, who looks into a Map, may eaſily perceive. But now the *Eaſt-Wind* blows croſs the Sea, and the Effect of it muſt be, to drive the Waters partly up to the Extremity of the Bay, and partly down to the Ocean, which probably is the Meaning (if we muſt allow an *Hyperbole* in the Expreſſion) of the Waters *being a Wall to the* Iſraelites *on their Right-hand, and on their Left*, becauſe they ſo defended them on both Sides, that the *Egyptians* cou'd no Way come at them, but by purſuing them in the ſame Path, which they took.

Why they ventur'd to purſue the *Iſraelites*, the ſacred *Hiſtorian* ſeems plainly to intimate, when he tells us, *(a)* that *the Angel of the Lord, which went before the Camp, removed, and went behind them: It came between the Camp of the* Egyptians, *and the Camp of* Iſrael, *and was a Cloud and Darkneſs to the one, but gave Light by Night to the other:* So that the true Reaſon, why *the* Egyptians *went in after the* Iſraelites *into the Midſt of the Sea*, was that they knew not where they were. They imagin'd, perhaps, that they were ſtill upon the Land, or at leaſt upon the Shore, whence the Sea had retir'd; the Darkneſs of the Night, and the *preternatural* Darkneſs of the Cloud, not ſuffering them to ſee the Mountains of Water on each Side. But *(b) when the Lord looked on the Hoſt of the* Egyptians *through the Pillar of Fire*, i. e. when he turn'd the bright Side of the Cloud upon them, to let them ſee the Danger they were in, and, at the ſame Time (as *Joſephus* adds) pour'd out a Storm of Thunder and Lightning, and Hail-ſtones upon them from the Cloud; *(c) let us flee*, cry'd they, *from the Face of* Iſrael, *for the Lord fighteth for them.*

It was not to be queſtion'd, but that *Moſes* was a Perſon of excellent Judgment: By his being ſo long a *General* of an Army, he cou'd not but know the proper Advantages that might be made in Marches and Retreats; and yet he ſeems to give no great *Specimen* of his Skill, by declining the Mountains, which poſſibly were inacceſſible to the Chariots and Horſemen, and marching his Men along the Sea Coaſts, where *Pharaoh*'s Army might make after him, (as we find they did) had not God commanded him to take this Rout, and foretold him the Event. Upon the Approach of the *Egyptian* Army, *Moſes* has ſufficiently deſcrib'd the Conſternation, which the *Iſraelites* were in; and, can any one ſuppoſe, that ſuch a Situation of Things was Matter of their own Choice, or that their Leader wou'd, of his own Head, have brought them into a Place, where there was no Poſſibility of eſcaping the Fury of their Enemies, without croſſing the Sea? *(d)* Had *Pharaoh* laid hold of this Advantage, (and Nothing but a miraculous Interpoſition cou'd have hinder'd him) how cou'd *Moſes*, with all his *ſweet Words*, and Addreſs, have prevail'd with his People to run into the Sea? Or, (ſuppoſing he truſted to the Tide at *Ebb*) how cou'd he know for Certainty, that this Ebb wou'd begin preciſely at the *Cloſe* of the Day, and that the *Egyptians* wou'd allow him Time to decamp, without their Guards giving Intelligence, or their Forces purſuing them in his Retreat; which had they done, to what diſmal Extremities muſt he and his People have been reduc'd? If we ſuppoſe that this was an haſty Reſolution, which the Difficulties, he found himſelf in, compell'd him to take; yet we ſhall ſtill be at a loſs to know, how he cou'd poſſibly anſwer for the Event, or with what Face he cou'd promiſe the People, that *(e) the Lord wou'd fight for them; that they ſhou'd ſtand ſtill, and ſee the Salvation, which he would ſhew them*; and *that the* Egyptians, who had given them ſo much Moleſtation, *they ſhou'd ſee them again no more for ever.*

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

He

(a) Exod. xiv. 19. 20. *(b)* Ver. 19. *(c)* Ver. 25. *(d)* *Calmet*'s Diſſer. ſur le Paſſage de la Mer. Rouge. *(e)* Exod. xiv. 13, 14.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

HE might not be ignorant perhaps of the Courſe of the Tide, and might eaſily diſcern the favourable Diſpoſition of the Wind: But was there never a Man in all the great Army, which *Pharaoh* brought with him, of equal Obſervation and Skill? It is incongruous to think, that the *Egyptians*, who excell'd, at that Time, all other Nations, in their Knowledge and Obſervation of *celeſtial* Bodies, ſhou'd be ignorant of the *Fluxes* and *Refluxes* of the Sea, in their *own* Country, in their *own* Coaſt, and in their *own* moſt trading and frequented Ports and Havens: And, if they were not ignorant of the Time of the Reflux, it is hardly to be imagin'd, that any Eagerneſs of Purſuit wou'd have made them venture into the *Gulf*, when they cou'd not but be ſenſible, that, in Caſe they *Miſcomputed*, the returning Waves wou'd devour, and ſwallow them up.

BUT the Truth is, their taking the Tide *at the Ebb* wou'd ſerve the Purpoſes, neither of the *Iſraelites* eſcaping, nor the *Egyptians* purſuing them. That it badly anſwer'd the Deſign of the *Egyptians* is plain from the Event; and that the *Iſraelites* cou'd promiſe themſelves no Security by it, is evident from the Nature of its Motion. *(f)* Every one knows, that, in the *Flux* of the Sea, its Waters come on *gradually*, and, for the Space of ſix Hours, ſwell higher and higher upon the Banks; and then, continuing in this State for about a Quarter of an Hour, they ſink by Degrees for ſix Hours more, and retreating from the Shores (which is call'd the *Reflux*) they remain at their loweſt Ebb, as long as they had done at their higheſt *Flux*, and then begin to change their Courſe, and creep in towards the Shore again; and in this Revolution they always go on, with the Variation only of three Quarters of an Hour, and ſome Minutes, in each Tide.

THAT the *Red-Sea* does ebb and flow, like other Seas, that have Communication with the *Main Ocean*, we readily grant; but then we are told by thoſe, who have made the exacteſt Obſervations, that the greateſt Diſtance, that it falls from the Place of High-Water, is not above three hundred Yards, and that theſe three hundred Yards, which the Sea leaves uncover'd at the Time of *Low-Water*, cannot continue *ſo* above half an Hour at moſt, becauſe during the firſt ſix Hours, the Sea does only retire by Degrees, and, in leſs than half an Hour, it begins to flow again towards the Shore: So that, upon a moderate Computation, the moſt, that can be allow'd, both of Time and Space of paſſable Ground, is but about two hundred Yards, during ſix Hours, and an hundred and fifty, during eight. But now it is plain, that a Multitude of above two Millions of Men, Women, and Children, encumber'd with great Quantities of Cattle and Houſhold-ſtuff, cou'd never be able to croſs, even though we ſuppoſe it to be that *Arm* or Point of the Sea, which is not far diſtant from the Port of *Suez*, and allow them withal a double Portion of Time, and a double Space of Ground to perform it in; whereas the general Tradition is, that the Place where the *Iſraelites enter'd* the *Red-Sea* on the *Egyptian* Side, is two or three Leagues below this northern Point, at a Place call'd *Kolſum*; and the Place, where they *came out* of it, on the *Arabian* Side, is, at preſent, call'd *(g) Corondal*, where the Sea is about eight or nine Miles in Breadth.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

FROM the *Breadth* of the Sea, and the *Iſraelites* coming out of it at a Place *(h)* of the ſame Name, with that of their Entrance, ſome have imagin'd, that they did not croſs from Shore to Shore, but only took a ſhort Compaſs along the *Strand*, that was left dry at Low-Water, and ſo came out a little farther in the *Bay*, which the *Egyptians* attempting to do, by the unexpected Return of the Tide, were all loſt. Now, beſides the Incongruity (as we ſaid before) of ſuppoſing the *Iſraelites* better

Did not coaſt along the Strand, but paſs'd quite through.

(f) Calmet's Diſſert. ibid. Numb. xxxiii. 6, 8.

(g) Thevenot's Voyage de Levant.

(h) Compare Exod. xiii. 20. with

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

better Judges of the Tide, than the *Egyptians* were, we do not find, that the Scriptures any where determine the Length of Time, which the former employ'd in paſſing this Sea. *In the Morning-Watch* (which continu'd from *two* to *ſix* in the Morning) it is ſaid indeed, that *(i) the Lord troubled the Hoſt of the* Egyptians, *and took off their Chariot-Wheels*; but how long the *Iſraelites* might have enter'd the Channel, before the *Egyptians* met with this Obſtruction, is no where ſaid; ſo that the Computation of Time will depend upon the ſuppos'd Breadth of the Sea.

Supposing then (as we ſaid before) that the Breadth of the Sea was about eight Miles in all, we cannot but imagine, that a People, *full of Strength and Vigour*, (as *(k)* the *Pſalmiſt* repreſents them) purſu'd by ſo dreadful and enrag'd an Enemy, wou'd make the beſt of their Way; nor can we ſee any Abſurdity in an Event, ſo abounding with Miracles, to ſuppoſe one more. *(l)* Now, if God interpos'd his Power to diſable the Chariots of *Pharaoh*, leſt the Return of the Waters ſhou'd excite the *Egyptians* Fears, and their Fears, by improving their Diligence, ſave them from Deſtruction; why might not God interpoſe the ſame Power (if there was Occaſion) to quicken and accelerate the *Iſraelites*, and make them perform their Paſſage in due Time? Nay, if we will allow his own Words to be a good Comment upon his Actions, we cannot but ſuppoſe, that he did ſo, when we find him, after all was over, recounting his Kindneſs to them thus: —— *(m) Ye have ſeen what I did unto the* Egyptians, *and how I did bear you on Eagle's Wings*, (where the Expreſſion certainly denotes ſome extraordinary Aſſiſtance given them in their Paſſage) *and brought you unto myſelf*. It cannot be deny'd indeed, but that ſome Ambiguity may ariſe as to the Place, where the *Iſraelites* came on Shore, (ſince they were at *Etham* but two Days before, and now landed in a Wilderneſs of the ſame Name) yet, if we will but ſuppoſe that there were two *Ethams*, the one a *Town*, where they encamp'd, on the *Egyptian* Side, and the other, on the *Arabian* Side, a *Wilderneſs*; or, if we will needs have the Wilderneſs of *Etham* denominated from the Town, ſuppoſing that the Town was ſituated near the Upper Part of the *Red-Sea*, and gave Denomination to a great *Deſart*, which ſurrounded the *Head* of the *Bay*, and reach'd down a conſiderable Space, on both Sides of it, we may eaſily perceive, that though the *Iſraelites*, in the *Evening*, march'd from the Wilderneſs of *Etham* croſs the Gulf, yet, upon their Landing in the *Morning*, they wou'd but be in another Part of the Wilderneſs of *Etham* ſtill. Upon the whole therefore it appears, that the *Iſraelites* coaſting it along the *Egyptian* Shore, in a Kind of *Semicircle*, is both a needleſs and groundleſs Suppoſition. For, had this been *all*, upon the Return of the Tide, the drown'd *Egyptians* muſt have been brought back upon their own Shore; whereas the Scripture Account of this Matter is, —— that, as ſoon as *(n) Moſes ſtretched out his Hand over the Sea, it returned to its Strength, and the Waters returned, and covered the* Egyptians, *who fled againſt them*; which certainly can denote no leſs, than that the Mountains of Waters were firſt *diſſolv'd*, where they were firſt *congeal'd*, i. e. on the *Egyptian* Side; and that *there* beginning to re-unite, in order to ſtop the *Egyptians* Return, they came ruſhing upon them in *vaſt Inundations*, and, of Courſe, ſweep'd them away to the contrary, *i. e. Arabian* Shore, where all the Hoſt of *Iſrael* were ſafely arriv'd.

From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

Thus we have endeavour'd to evince the Reality of this miraculous Event, and to examine the Pretences of thoſe, who have either compar'd it with others recorded in profane Story, or aſcrib'd it to natural Cauſes, or eſpied ſome ſeeming Contradictions

(i) Exod. xiv. 24, 25. *(k)* Pſal. cv. 37. *(l)* *Saurin's* Diſſert. *(m)* Exod. xix. 4.
(n) Exod. xiv. 27, 28.

A. M. 2513, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1491, &c.

Contradictions in it; and have nothing now more to do, but, with the grateful *Pſalmiſt*, to acknowledge, upon this Occaſion, (o) *Thy Way, O Lord, is in the Sea, and thy Paths in the great Waters, and thy Foot-ſteps are not known. Thou art a God, that doth Wonders, and haſt declared thy Power among the People.* From Exod. xiii. to Chap. xxxiv. 24.

(o) Pſal. lxxvii. 19, 14.

CHAP. II.

From the Building of the TABERNACLE, *to the Death of* KORAH, *&c.*

The HISTORY.

A. M. 2514, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1490, &c.

Moſes, *on the Mount receives Directions concerning the* Tabernacle, *&c.*

FOR full forty Days and forty Nights *Moſes* continu'd upon Mount *Sinai*, as he had done before, without either Eating or Drinking; and when he came down from thence, his Face had contracted ſuch a *Luſtre*, by his holding ſo long a Conference with God, that the People were not able to approach him; and therefore, whenever he talk'd with *Aaron*, or any of them, he was accuſtom'd to put a Veil over his Face, as long as the Luſtre laſted, but never made Uſe of any, when he went into the Tabernacle to receive the divine Commands.

WHILE he was on the Mount, God gave him the *Ten Commandments* written in two *Tables*, and withal full Inſtructions, in what Manner the *Tabernacle*, intended for his own Habitation among them, and all its ſacred *Utenſils*, were to be made; which he now communicated to the People, and, at the ſame Time, exhorted them to bring in their ſeveral Offerings to that Purpoſe. This they did in ſuch Abundance, that he thought it convenient, by a publick Proclamation, to reſtrain their farther Liberality; and, having thus made a ſufficient Collection of all Kinds of Materials, he gave them to *Bezaleel* and *Aholiah*, the two great Artiſts in Building, and all Manner of Workmanſhip, whom God had before made Choice of. From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

IN leſs than ſix Months, the Tabernacle, and all its rich Furniture were finiſh'd; and, on the firſt Day of the firſt Month, in the ſecond Year after the *Iſraelites* Departure out of *Egypt*, it was ſet up: When, as ſoon as this was done, the *Pillar of the Cloud* († which is call'd the *Glory of the Lord*) cover'd and quite fill'd it, ſo that

† *The Glory of the Lord* (what the *Jews* call SCHEKINAH) was a particular Manifeſtation of the Divine Preſence, appearing uſually in the Shape of a *Cloud*, but ſometimes breaking out into a bright and refulgent Fire. For we muſt not ſuppoſe that the *Cloud*, and the *Glory of God*, were two *different* Things, but one and the ſame, even as the *Pillar of the Cloud* and *Fire* were; for *outwardly* it was a Cloud, and *inwardly* a Fire. And, in like Manner here, the external Part of it cover'd the *Tabernacle* without, while the inward Part of it ſhone in full Glory within the *Houſe*; in which Senſe the Account of this *Appearance* (Exod. xvi. 10.) is to be underſtood: The Glory of *the Lord abode upon Mount* Sinai, *and the Cloud covered it* (i. e. cover'd *the Glory of the Lord*, not *the Mount*) *ſix Days*; for, on the *ſeventh* Day, this Glory broke through the Cloud, and appear'd like a *devouring Fire* in the Sight of all the People, Exod. xxiv. 17. This wonderful Appearance, whether occaſion'd by the Preſence of *Angels*, or (as others imagine) by the Reſidence of the *ſecond Perſon* in the ever bleſſed *Trinity*, took Poſſeſſion of the Tabernacle, on the Day of its Conſecration, and *(as the* Jews *believe)* paſs'd into the *Sanctuary* of *Solomon*'s Temple, on the Day of its *Dedication*, where it continu'd to the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* and the Temple by the *Chaldeans*; after which Time it was never more ſeen. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Schekinah*, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

A M. 2514, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1492, &c.

that *Moſes*, for ſome Time, was not able to enter in. However, when he enter'd in, he receiv'd Inſtructions from God, which he communicated to the People, in what Manner (according to this new *Inſtitution)* he was to be worſhipp'd by *Sacrifices* and *Oblations*; what *Feſtivals* were to be obſerv'd, and how celebrated; what *Meats* were forbidden; what the Inſtances of *Uncleanneſs* were; and what the Degrees of *Conſanguinity* prohibited in Marriage. And having appointed theſe, and ſome other Ordinances, he ſolemnly conſecrated *Aaron* to the *High-Prieſt*'s Office; his Sons, and, in them, their Poſterity, he made Prieſts; and to theſe he adjoin'd the whole Tribe of *Levi*, to ſerve in the Tabernacle, with particular Allowances for their Subſiſtence, and ſome reſtraining Laws, as to their Perſons, their Conduct, and Marriages.

Conſecrates Aaron *and his Sons.*

EIGHT Days after his Conſecration, *Aaron* offer'd his firſt *Burnt-Sacrifice* for himſelf and the People, which God was pleas'd to manifeſt his Acceptance of, in the Sight of all the People, by ſending down Fire from Heaven, which, by conſuming the Offering, ſtruck them with ſuch Reverence, that they all fell proſtrate in humble Adoration before the Divine Majeſty. The Fire, thus miraculouſly kindled, was, *(a)* by the divine Command, to be ‡ kept perpetually burning, and no other to be us'd in all the Oblations that were made to God. But *Nadab* and *Abihu*, two unhappy Sons of *Aaron*, unmindful of this Command, took common Fire on their Cenſers, and ſo, entering the Tabernacle, began to offer Incenſe; but, by this their profane Approach, they ſo offended God, that he immediately ſtruck them dead with Lightning; and, to inject Terror to the reſt, order'd them to be carry'd forthwith out of the Camp, and there bury'd without any Mourning, or Funeral Pomp. And, much about the ſame Time, he gave another Inſtance of his Severity againſt Sin, in a certain Perſon, the Son of an *Iſraelitiſh* Woman indeed, but whoſe Father was an *Egyptian*, who, for his *curſing* and *blaſpheming* the Name of God, was by him directly order'd to be ſton'd to Death; from which it became a ſtanding Law, († though there was no expreſs Precept to that Purpoſe before) that whoever was guilty of the like Offence, whether *Stranger* or *Iſraelite*, was to undergo the ſame Puniſhment.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Whereof two are kill'd with Lightning, and ſome other Offenders puniſh'd.

NAY, and not long after this, another Inſtance of the divine Severity, was upon a Man, who *by a poſt-fact-Law*, was likewiſe adjudg'd to be ſton'd to Death, for violating the *Sabbath* (which God had ſo ſtrictly injoin'd to be obſerv'd) by gathering ſome Sticks on that Day. There was

(a) Lev. vi. 12, 13.

‡ If it be aſked, how this Fire cou'd be preſerv'd, when both the *Tabernacle*, and the *Altar* whereon it burnt, were in Motion? (as they evidently were, when the *Iſraelites* journey'd in the Wilderneſs) I ſee no Reaſon, why we may not ſuppoſe, that, upon theſe Occaſions, there might be a certain *portable Conſervatory* of this *ſacred Fire*, diſtinct from the *Altar*: And that there was ſome ſuch Veſſel made Uſe of, ſeems manifeſt from the Injunction, that, at ſuch Times, *the Aſhes ſhould be removed from off the Altar, and a purple Cloth ſpread over it*, Numb. iv. 8. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. IV. Occaſional. Annot. 2.

† The Criminal, and his Offence, are only thus recorded by *Moſes*:——*The Son of an* Iſraelitiſh *Woman whoſe Father was an* Egyptian, *and a Man of* Iſrael, *ſtrove together in the Camp, and the* Iſraelitiſh *Woman's Son blaſphemed the Name of the Lord, and curſed*, Lev. xxiv. 11: But the *Jews*, in explaining theſe Words, have follow'd either that ſuperſtitious Reſpect, which they pay to the Name JEHOVAH, or their wonted Humour of ſupplying the Silence of the ſacred Hiſtory with Circumſtances, no where to be found, but in their own Imaginations. In purſuance to their *Superſtition*, they fancy, that the Crime of this *Blaſphemer* conſiſted ſimply in his pronouncing the Name JEHOVAH, foraſmuch as they ſuppoſe, that there can be no Blaſphemy without ſuch pronunciation; and, in purſuance to their Humour of ſupplying the *Silence* of Scripture, they have invented a *Genealogy* for this Blaſphemer. For they tell us, that he was the Son of one of thoſe Taſk-maſters, who were ſet over the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, and of that very Taſk-maſter, who, by perſonating her Huſband, violated the Chaſtity of the *Jewiſh* Matron *Shelometh*, and was afterwards ſlain by *Moſes*, for uſing the ſame Huſband with great Barbarity; that the Son, who is here mention'd, quarrelling with a Man of the Tribe of *Dan*, becauſe he wou'd not let him encamp in the ſame Diſtrict, brought his Cauſe before *Moſes*; but that, being condemn'd at his *Tribunal*, he began, out of mere Rage and Madneſs, to *blaſpheme*. Of all this however *Moſes* himſelf ſays nothing, out of a Scruple (as we may well ſuppoſe) to relate the Circumſtances of a Crime, which his very Thoughts deteſted. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations 58.

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was no Penalty annex'd to the Violation of this Commandment; and therefore the People, who brought him before *Moſes*, were order'd to keep him in Cuſtody, until he ſhou'd know the divine Pleaſure concerning *Sabbath-breakers*; and, when he acquainted them, that ſuch Tranſgreſſors were to be puniſh'd with Death, *(b)* they immediately led him out of the Camp, and there ſton'd and bury'd him.

The Iſraelites *muſter'd, and their Manner of encamping and marching.*

WHILE the *Iſraelites* lay encamp'd in the Wilderneſs of *Sinai*, God appointed *Moſes* firſt, † to renew the Ordinance of the *Paſſover*, and then, with the Help of *Aaron*, and the *Heads* of each Tribe, to make a general *Muſter* of the Men, that were able to bear Arms; which accordingly was done, and the whole Number (excluſive of the Tribe of *Levi*, which were appointed to attend the Service of the *Tabernacle)* amounted to ſix hundred and three thouſand, five hundred and fifty Men; and upon this Muſter, God appointed their Encampment, ever after, to be in this Manner.

THE whole Body of the People were diſpos'd under four large *Battalions*, ſo plac'd, as to incloſe the Tabernacle, and each under * one general *Standard*. The Standard of the Camp of *Judah* was firſt. It conſiſted of the Tribes of *Judah*, *Iſſachar*, and *Zebulon*, the Sons of *Leah*, which pitch'd on the *Eaſt-ſide* of the Tabernacle, towards the Riſing of the Sun. On the *South-ſide* was the Standard of the Camp of *Reuben*, under which were the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Simeon*, the Sons of *Leah* likewiſe, and that of *Gad*, the Son of *Zilphah*, her Maid. On the *Weſt-ſide* was the Standard of the Camp of *Ephraim*, under which were the Tribes of *Ephraim*, *Manaſſeh*, and *Benjamin*. And on the *North-ſide* was the Standard of the Camp of *Dan*, and *Napthali*, the Sons of *Bilhah*, *Rachel*'s Maid, and that of *Aſher*, the Son of *Zilphah*. Between theſe four great Camps and the Tabernacle, were pitch'd the four leſs Camps of the *Prieſts* and the *Levites*, who had their Attendance about it. On the *Eaſt-ſide* encamp'd *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and *Aaron*'s Sons, who had the Charge of the *Sanctuary*. On the *South-ſide* were the *Kohathites*, a Part of the *Levites*, deſcended from *Kohath*, the ſecond Son of *Levi*. On the *Weſt-ſide* were the *Gerſhonites*, another Part of the *Levites*, deſcended from *Gerſhon*, *Levi*'s eldeſt Son; and on the *North-ſide* were the *Merarites*, the remaining Part of the *Levites*, who ſprang from *Merari*, *Levi*'s youngeſt Son.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

THIS was the Order of the *Iſraelites* encamping; and in like Manner the Method of their marching was thus —— When

(b) Numb. xv. 31, *&c.*

† During the Sojourning of the Children of *Iſrael* in the Wilderneſs, they ſeem to have a divine Diſpenſation from obſerving the Ordinances both of Circumciſion and the Paſſover. *Circumciſion* did not conſiſt with their itinerant Courſe of Life, and for the Celebration of the *Paſſover* they had not, in every Encampment, all the Materials that were neceſſary: But having now reſted in the Confines of the Holy Mount for almoſt the Space of a whole Year, after the Tabernacle was ſet up, the High-Prieſt conſecrated, and his firſt Oblation honour'd with a gracious Acceptance, God thought it not an improper Time to re-ordain the Celebration of the Paſſover, that ſo remarkable a Deliverance, as their Eſcape out of *Egypt* (which, by their repeated Deſires of returning thither, ſeem'd in a great Meaſure, to have been forgotten) might not altogether be obliterated. And if it ſhou'd be aſk'd, whence they cou'd have a Sufficiency of Lambs and Kids for ſo vaſt a Multitude to feaſt on; there is no Reaſon to deny (even ſuppoſing they had not a Supply of their own) but that they might traffick with the *Iſhmaelites*, and antient *Arabs* inhabiting theſe Parts, for ſuch a Number of ſmall Cattle, and being not far diſtant from *Midian* (Exod. iii. 1.) by the Intereſt of *Jethro*, might from thence be furniſh'd with ſuch a Quantity of Meal for unleaven'd Bread, as this one Paſſover (as this was the only one they kept in the Wilderneſs) may be preſum'd to require. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

* All the twelve Tribes were diſtinguiſh'd from one another by particular *Standards*, and each Standard is ſuppos'd by ſome to have been of the Colour of that Stone in *Aaron*'s *Pectoral*, upon which the Name of the Tribe, whereunto it belong'd, was written. The Figures on the Standards of the four principal Tribes, that we have mention'd, are theſe——In that of *Judah* was borne a *Lion*; and that of *Ephraim*, an *Ox*; in that of *Reuben*, the Head of a *Man*; and in that of *Dan*, an *Eagle*, and a *Serpent* in his Talons; which are indeed the four moſt perfect Animals, foraſmuch as the *Lion* is the moſt noble among wild *Beaſts*; the *Ox* among *Beaſts of Labour*; the *Eagle* among *Birds*; and the *Man* among all other Creatures. *Lamy*'s Introduction, Lib. 1.

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Whenever they were to decamp, (which always was, when the *Pillar of the Cloud* was taken up from the Tabernacle) the Trumpet ſounded, and, upon the firſt Alarm, the Standard of *Judah* being rais'd, the three Tribes which belong'd to it ſet forward; whereupon the Tabernacle was immediately taken down, and the *Gerſhonites* and *Merarites* attended the Waggons, with the Boards and Staves of it. When theſe were on their March, a ſecond Alarm was ſounded, upon which the Standard of *Reuben*'s Camp advanc'd with the three Tribes under it; and after them follow'd the *Kohathites* bearing the *Sanctuary*, which, becauſe it was more *holy*, and not ſo cumberſome as the Pillars and Boards of the Tabernacle, was not put into a Waggon, but carry'd upon their Shoulders. Next follow'd the Standard of *Ephraim*'s Camp with the three Tribes belonging to it; and, laſt of all, the other three Tribes, under the Standard of *Dan*, brought up the Rear.

Moſes *appoints 70 Elders to aſſiſt him in the Government.*

After that the *Iſraelites* had, for ſome Time, continu'd in Eaſe and Reſt, not far from the Skirts of Mount *Sinai*, the *Pillar of the Cloud* gave them a Signal to decamp; but they had not march'd above three Days into the Wilderneſs, before they began to complain of the *Wearineſs* of their Journey, and to murmur againſt God; which ſo provok'd him, that he † ſent down *Fire*, and deſtroy'd the *Loiterers*, and ſuch as were found in the extreme Parts of the Camp; ſo that, though upon *Moſes*'s Interceſſion, the Fire ceas'd, the Place nevertheleſs obtain'd the Name of *Taberah* which ſignifies *Burning*. From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

This freſh Inſtance of the People's *Stubbornneſs* made *Moſes* apprehenſive, that, though he had certainly eas'd himſelf, in ſome Meaſure, by conſtituting ſuch Magiſtrates, as *Jethro*, his Father-in-law, had adviſ'd him to; yet the Work of governing ſo numerous, and ſo mutinous a People, wou'd ſtill be an Over-match for him; and therefore, by God's immediate Direction, † he made choice of Seventy of the chief of the Elders of the People, Men of Renown for their Wiſdom and Integrity, and every Way fit to be erected into a *ſupreme Court*.

The People murmur for Want of Fleſh.

To theſe God imparted a Portion of the ſame Spirit, that he had given unto *Moſes*, which enabled them to be highly aſſiſtant to him in the Government of a People, which, almoſt every Day, were diſcovering a Spirit of Diſcontent. For no ſooner were they remov'd from *Taberah*, but they began to murmur at the *Manna* they had ſo long eat, and to regret the *Fleſh-Pots* of *Egypt*, they had parted with; and hereupon they beſet *Moſes*'s Tent on all Sides, and, in a tumultuous Manner, demanded

† The Fire, which God ſent upon the *Iſraelites*, came either immediately from Heaven, like Lightning, or did iſſue from the Pillar of the Cloud, which went before the Tabernacle; or, (according to the Conjecture of a learned Commentator) that, which is here call'd Fire, might be an hot, burning Wind, in theſe deſart Places not unuſual, and many Times very peſtilential, and, on this Occaſion, *preternaturally* rais'd in the Rear of the Army, to puniſh the *Stragglers*, and ſuch, as out of a Pretence of Wearineſs, lagg'd behind. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† It may be ſuppos'd indeed, that *Moſes* had no Occaſion for any more *aſſiſting* Magiſtrates, after what had been conſtituted by the Advice of *Jethro*, his Father-in-law: But it is highly probable, that thoſe of *Jethro*'s adviſing were appointed to hear and judge only in ſmaller Cauſes, whereas all weighty and difficult Points, as well as laſt Appeals in ſmaller Matters, ſtill were left upon *Moſes*; and that it was to eaſe himſelf of this Burthen, that he made Choice of theſe *Seventy*, as Men of ſuperior Capacity and Underſtanding, and who were to be aſſiſted by the Spirit of God in their Judgments and Determinations. This Aſſembly of the *Seventy* Elders, not only the *Jews*, but even *Grotius*, and ſome other *Chriſtians*, will needs have to be the ſame with that famous *Council*, which afterwards obtain'd the Name of Sanhedrim. The *Rabbins* have left no Stone unturn'd to prove, that the *Sanhedrim* did conſtantly ſubſiſt ever ſince its firſt Inſtitution by *Moſes*, and that the Members of it always aſſembled themſelves before the Tabernacle, where-ever that was ſet up, either in the Wilderneſs, or in the promis'd Land, till the erecting of the Temple by *Solomon*, who, at the ſame Time, built them a ſtately Room or Hall to convene in. They add farther, that this *ſupreme* Court was continu'd in *Babylon*, during their Captivity there, and that, at their Return, it had the ſame Place rebuilt in the *ſecond* Temple, and ſo continu'd till its total Extinction under the *Romans*. But as they bring no Authority for theſe, and many other Particulars relating to this Aſſembly, but merely their own *Traditions*, they are juſtly rejected by the major Part of *Chriſtians*, who can find no Foot ſteps of any ſuch high Court, either in the Times of *Joſhua*, of the *Judges*, or of the *Kings*, nor indeed after the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, till the Time of the *Maccabees*. *Calmet*'s Diſſertations, ſur la Police des anciens Hebreux, and Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. 1. c. 7.

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demanded of him a Supply of Fleſh, inſtead of *Manna*; which, how unreaſonable ſoever it was for them to requeſt, God nevertheleſs promis'd *Moſes* to perform: And, accordingly, caus'd the *South-Wind* to ariſe, which drove vaſt Quantities of *Quails* from the Sea-Coaſts to within a Mile of the Camp, where they lay, about a Yard thick, upon the Ground. But while they were regaling themſelves with theſe Dainties, the Anger of the Lord fell upon them, and ſmote a great Number of them with a ſore Diſeaſe, whereof they ſuddenly dy'd, in Memory of which the Place came to be call'd *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, i. e. the *Graves*, or *Sepulchres* of *Luſt*, and *Concupiſcence*.

And Aaron *and* Miriam *againſt* Moſes.

FROM this Place the People took their Journey to *Hazeroth*, where another unhappy Accident befel them. For *Aaron* and his Siſter *Miriam*, obſerving what great Power their Brother *Moſes* had with the People, and that God chiefly made uſe of him in the Delivery of his Oracles to them, began to envy him; but, to give ſome Colour to their Quarrel, they pretend to fall out with him upon Account of his marrying a Foreigner, whom they call'd in Contempt an *Ethiopian*. This *Moſes* cou'd not but perceive: But, as it was a perſonal *Pique*, he took no Notice of it. God however wou'd not ſuffer it to go off ſo; and therefore calling *Moſes*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam* before the Door of the *Tabernacle*, he ſharply rebuk'd the two latter. He gave them to underſtand the Diſparity, † in Point of *divine Revelation*, between them and him, and (to leave a Brand upon their contumacious Affecting an *Equality*) he immediately ſmote *Miriam* † with a Leproſy; and though, upon *Moſes*'s Interceſſion, he promis'd to remove it, yet, becauſe the Offence was *publick*, he order'd her to be turn'd out of the Camp for ſeven Days, in the Manner of any common Leper, that others might be deterr'd from the like *ſeditious* Practices. After ſeveral Encampments, the People came at length to † *Kadiſh-Barnea*, on the Frontiers of *Canaan*, where *Moſes* was commanded to chuſe twelve fit Men, out of each Tribe one, (among whom were *Joſhua* and *Caleb*) to take a View of the Country: And, accordingly, having receiv'd their Inſtructions from him, to examine diligently into

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

He ſends Spies into the Land of Canaan.

† The *Jewiſh* Commentators make the Difference between *Moſes*, and other Prophets, to conſiſt in theſe Particulars, 1ſt, That God ſpake to others by a *Mediator*, i. e. (as they explain it) by ſome Angel; but to him by himſelf, without the Intervention of any other. 2dly, That they never propheſy'd, but their Senſes were all bound up either in Viſions, or in Dreams; whereas he was perfectly awake, as we are, when we diſcourſe one with another. 3dly, That after the Viſion was over, they were oftentimes left ſo weak and feeble, that they cou'd ſcarce ſtand upon their Feet, (as appears from *Dan.* viii. 18) whereas *Moſes* ſpake with the divine Majeſty without any Conſternation, or Alteration. And 4thly, That no Prophet, but he, cou'd know the Mind of God, when he pleas'd, becauſe he communicated himſelf to them only when he thought proper; whereas *Moſes* might at any Time have Recourſe to God, to enquire of him, and receive an Anſwer. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† A *Leproſy*, as well as all other Diſtempers (ſuch as the *Scurvy*, *Ring-worm*, *Itch*, &c.) which bear Reſemblance to it, does proceed originally from a previous ill Diſpoſition both in the Blood and Juices, but the more immediate Cauſe of it is an Infinity of *ſmall imperceptible Worms*, that inſinuate themſelves between the Fleſh and Skin, which firſt prey upon the *Scarf-Skin*, then upon the *inner Skin*, and afterwards upon the Extremities of the *Nerves* and *Muſcles*, from whence ariſes a total Corruption of the whole Maſs of Blood, and all the other Symptoms attending it. But the Leproſy here inflicted upon *Miriam* was ſudden and inſtantaneous. The Juices of her Body were not corrupted by a gradual Decay, but turn'd at once into theſe corroding *Animals*. And, as this was a fit Puniſhment for her Pride and Detraction, ſo, by its being inflicted on her, and not on *Aaron*, it ſeems not improbable, that ſhe was *firſt* in the Tranſgreſſion, and drew *Aaron* (who ſeems, in ſome Inſtances, to be a Perſon of too much *Facility*) over to her Party. *Aaron* indeed, by his Office, was appointed to judge of Leproſy, which he cou'd not have done, had himſelf been infected with it; and as he was lately conſecrated his High-Prieſt, God, for the Preſervation of his Authority, might not think it proper to make him ſo ſoon become vile and contemptible in the Eyes of the People, as this Diſtemper was known to make Men. *Calmet*'s Diſſertation, *ſur la Nature*, &c. *de la Lepre*, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Moſt *Commentators* and *Geographers* are of Opinion, that whatever is ſaid of *Kadeſh*, in the Travels of the *Iſraelites*, is to be underſtood of one and the ſame Place; whereas the ſacred Hiſtory plainly makes mention of two Places of the ſame Name; one, adjoining to the Wilderneſs of *Paran*, which is mention'd, *Numb.* xiii. 26. and the other lying in the Wilderneſs of *Sin*, mention'd in *Numb.* xx. 1. and xxxiii. 36. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

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into the Strength of its Cities and Inhabitants, the Nature and Fertility of its Soil, and the like, they ſet out upon their Progreſs, and finiſh'd it in forty Days.

At their Return they paſs'd through a Valley, which, for its Fertility in Vines, is call'd the Valley of *Eſhcol*, which ſignifies a *Cluſter of Grapes*; and here they cut down a Branch, with but one Cluſter upon it, which, * by Reaſon of its immoderate Largeneſs, as well as to preſerve the Grapes from being bruis'd, they hung upon a Pole, and carry'd between two Men's Shoulders. Nor was this the only Product of that happy Soil; the golden Fig, and beautiful Pomegranate adorn'd the Trees, and a Variety of other Fruits (of which they brought *Samples* along with them) loaded the luxuriant Branches.

Being at length happily arriv'd in the Camp, they went, and made their Report to *Moſes* and *Aaron*, in the Preſence of the Elders, and of all the People. They began indeed with extolling the Riches of the Land, and ſhew'd them a *Specimen* of ſome of the Fruits, which it produc'd; but when they perceiv'd that this Account had fir'd the People with a Deſire to become the happy Poſſeſſors of it by a ſpeedy Conqueſt, *ten* of them then began to alter their *Tone*, and to repreſent it as a Thing impoſſible, both by Reaſon of the Strength of its fortify'd Towns, and the Valour, and *gigantick* Stature of its Inhabitants.

Upon their Report, the People are for returning to Egypt, *and the falſe Spies are ſlain.*

Joshua and *Caleb* were the only two, that remain'd true to their Report, and gave them all imaginable Encouragement, that the Enterprize was practicable; but the cowardly Account of the other ten had got ſuch a powerful Poſſeſſion of them, that they cry'd out, one and all, that they cou'd never hope to overcome ſuch powerful Nations, in Compariſon of which they look'd upon themſelves as mere *Graſhoppers*, and *Reptiles*; and their Murmuring, in ſhort, grew to ſuch an Height by the next Morning, † that a Return to *Egypt* was thought more adviſeable, than to face ſuch an Enemy. Nay, in the Hearing of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, of *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, (who endeavour'd to diſſuade them all they cou'd, even to the Hazard of being ſton'd by them) they were deliberating upon a proper Perſon to re-conduct them into the Land of their former *Thraldom*; when, all on a ſudden, the *Glory of God* appear'd in a brighter Luſtre than ordinary, in the Tabernacle, and from thence was heard to ſpeak to *Moſes* in ſuch *threatning* Terms, as gave the People Cauſe to fear, that ſome ſpeedy and terrible Judgment wou'd be the Reward of their Rebellion and Ingratitude. From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Here *Moſes* was forc'd again (as at ſeveral other Times) to become their *Interceſſor*, and made uſe of ſuch powerful Arguments, and Expoſtulations, as did, in ſome Meaſure, avert the divine Vengeance: But, as their Ingratitude and Infidelity were become intolerable, notwithſtanding God's conſtant Care in providing againſt their Wants, ſkreening them from their

* That there are Vines and Grapes of a prodigious Bigneſs in thoſe *eaſtern* and *ſouthern* Parts of the World, is a Matter recorded by ſeveral Writers. *Strabo* tells, that in *Margiana*, and other neighbouring Countries, there were Vines ſo very thick about, that two Men cou'd ſcarce fathom them, and that they produc'd Bunches of Grapes of two Cubits long. *Pliny* informs us, that in the *Inland* Parts of *Africa* there are Bunches of Grapes bigger than young Children. *Olearius*, in his Travels into *Perſia*, acquaints us, that, not far from *Aſtracan*, he ſaw Vines, which a Man cou'd hardly graſp with both his Arms; and the learned *Huetius* affirms, that in *Crete*, *Chios*, and other Iſlands in the *Archipelago*, there are Bunches of Grapes, from ten, to forty Pounds in Weight. Queſt. *Alnet.* Lib. 2. and *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† Though they might, in their raging Fits, ſpeak of returning into *Egypt*; yet it is an amazing Thing, that they ſhou'd continue in their Madneſs, and deliberate about it, nay actually appoint them a *Leader*, as *Nehemiah*, ix. 17, ſays they did. For how cou'd they get thither without Food, which they cou'd not expect that God wou'd ſend from Heaven, when they had thus ſhamefully forſaken him? How cou'd they hope to find their Way, when the Cloud, which directed them, was withdrawn from them, or think of *coping* with ſuch Nations, as wou'd oppoſe their Paſſage in Caſe they ſhou'd hit upon the right Way? And, after all, if they came into *Egypt*, what Reception cou'd they expect from a People, whoſe King, and Princes, and *Firſt-born* had lately been deſtroy'd upon their Accounts? Nothing can be ſaid in Anſwer to theſe Queſtions, but that outrageous Diſcontent infatuates Mens Minds, and will not ſuffer them to conſider any Thing, but that which grieves them. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xvii.

M. Scheitz del. — J. Vander Gucht Sculp.

Pl. 51 *And Moses sent them to spy out the Land of Canaan* — *Numb. Chap. 13. V. 17.*

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their Enemies, and preſerving them from all Dangers; he ſolemnly declar'd, that none of that Generation, above twenty Years of Age, except * *Joſhua* and *Caleb*, (who receiv'd his Commendations for their Fidelity) ſhou'd enter into the promis'd Land, but ſhou'd wander, from Place to Place, in the Wilderneſs, for the Space of † forty Years: And as for the falſe *Spies*, the immediate Authors of this Rebellion, they were all deſtroy'd by a ſudden Death *(c)*, and became the firſt Inſtances of the Puniſhment denounc'd againſt the whole Nation.

The Iſraelites *defeated.*

THIS ſevere Puniſhment, join'd with the Sentence of *Excluſion* from the promis'd Land, gave the Humours of the People ſoon another Turn: For, ſuppoſing that their *Forwardneſs* now wou'd make ſome Atonement for their former *Cowardice*, they aſſembled themſelves together next Morning, and offer'd to go upon the Conqueſt. *Moſes* endeavour'd, what he cou'd, to diſſuade them from ſo raſh an Enterprize, by telling them, that it was contrary to God's expreſs Command, and therefore cou'd not proſper; that, by their late undutiful Behaviour, they had forfeited his Aſſiſtance and Protection, without which it was impoſſible for them to ſucceed; and that, as the *Amalekites* and *Canaanites* had gain'd the Paſſes of the Mountains before them, there was no fighting them *upon the Par*. But all this Admonition had no Weight with them: Notwithſtanding the *Ark of the Covenant* went not with them, notwithſtanding *Moſes*, their *General*, was not at the Head of them; yet out they march'd to the Top of the Mountains, where the Enemy ſurpriz'd, defeated, and, having ſlain many of them, purſu'd the reſt, as far as *Hormah*.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

The Rebellion of Korah, *&c. and the Deſtruction that attended it.*

WHILE the People continu'd in the Wilderneſs, many remarkable Occurrences befel them, and Seditions, almoſt innumerable, were daily fermenting; but *one* in particular was hatch'd (with the utmoſt Deliberation) in the Breaſt of one of the *Chiefs* of the Tribe of *Levi*, and countenanc'd by ſome of the moſt conſiderable Men in the whole Camp.

† *KORAH*, the great Grandſon of *Levi* by his Father *Jahar*, and, conſequently, one of the Heads of that *Tribe*, impatient

* *Joſephus* introduces *Joſhua* and *Caleb*, (in order to pacify the tumultuous People) delivering themſelves in Words to this Effect. "How is it poſſible for you *good People*, to diſtruſt the Veracity and Goodneſs of God, and at the "ſame Time, to give Credit to Stories and Amuſements about the Land of *Canaan*, that are propagated on purpoſe "to abuſe you? Why ſhou'd not you rather believe and follow thoſe, who have taken ſo much Pains to put you "into the Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of the Bleſſings you deſire? What's the *Height* of Mountains, or *Depth* of Rivers "to Men of undaunted Spirits, and of honourable Reſolutions; eſpecially, when God is both their Protector and "Defender? Wherefore let us advance, and attack the Enemy, without ever queſtioning the Event. Only truſt "God for your Guide, and follow us, where we ſhall lead you." *Jewiſh* Antiquities, Lib. 3. c. 14

† *Moſes* here makes uſe of a round Number, in Alluſion to the Forty Days of the Spies ſearching the Land; though it is plain, that the *Children* did enter into the Land of *Canaan* in leſs than thirty-nine Years, after this Sentence was pronounc'd againſt their *Fathers*. The Truth is, *Moſes* reckons the Time paſt ſince they came firſt into the Wilderneſs, which was a Year and an Half; ſo that the Meaning of the Sentence is, —— That they ſhou'd wander for forty Years *in all*, before they went out of the Wilderneſs, which however is not to be underſtood ſo preciſely, as to want nothing at all of it: For ſince they came out of *Egypt* on the 15th Day of the *firſt Month*, and arriv'd in *Canaan*, and pitch'd their Tents in *Gilgal*, on the *tenth Day* of the *firſt Month*, of the one and fortieth Year after their Departure out of *Egypt*, Joſh. iv. 19; it is plain that there wanted five Days of full forty Years. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. 1. c. 7. and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

(c) Numb. xiv. 36, 37.

† At what Time, or in what Encampment, this Rebellion of *Korah* and his Adherents happen'd, the ſacred Hiſtory has not inform'd us; but, as the general Opinion is, that the Cauſe of the Mutiny was his Reſentment upon the Advancement of *Aaron*, and his Family, to the Office of the High-Prieſt; ſo we find *Joſephus* introducing him, as addreſſing himſelf to his Accomplices in Words to this Purpoſe: "A Scandal it is, and a Thing not to be endur'd, "for *Moſes* to take upon him at this Rate; to carry on his Ambition thus, under the Maſk of Holineſs and Religion, "and by that Means to raiſe himſelf a Reputation to the Wrong of other Men. He gave lately the Prieſthood, "and other Dignities to his Brother *Aaron*, without any Right or Colour for it. No Conſent of the People was aſk'd, "nor any Pretence of Authority produc'd, ſave only his own arbitrary Will and Pleaſure: —— For what has "he to ſay for himſelf for ſo doing? If God has annex'd the Honour to the Tribe of *Levi*, I myſelf may pretend a "Right to the Preference, being of the ſame Stock with *Moſes*, and his Superior both in Riches and Years: Or, if it "be to paſs by *Seniority*, it belongs to the Tribe of *Reuben*, viz. to *Dathan*, *Abiram*, and *Phalu*, who are the *Seniors* "of that Tribe, and Men of eminent Credit every Way among them." *Jewiſh* Antiq. Lib. 4. c. 2.

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impatient to behold *Aaron*, and his Family rais'd to the higheſt Office in the *Prieſthood*, to which he thought himſelf had an equal Title, was always caballing againſt him, until he had drawn a conſiderable Number of eminent Perſons into his Intereſt, and, among theſe *Dathan*, *Abiram*, and *Hur*, who were Heads of the Houſe of *Reuben*. As ſoon as things were ripe for an open Rupture, *Korah* appear'd at the Head of the Faction, and publickly upbraided *Moſes* and *Aaron* with an unjuſt Ambition, in uſurping upon the Liberties of the People, in ingroſſing all Power into their own Hands, and excluding every Body elſe.

Surpriz'd at the Boldneſs of this Accuſation, *Moſes*, for Concern, fell proſtrate upon his Face; but when he roſe again, he deſir'd that the Determination of their Controverſy might be left to God, and, for that Purpoſe, appointed them to appear, on the Morrow, at the Door of the Tabernacle, with every Man his Cenſer in his Hand: And then addreſſing himſelf to *Korah*, and the reſt of the *Levites*, he put them in mind of their Ingratitude and Arrogance, in not being content with the Dignity and Privileges, which God had annex'd to their Tribe, without aſpiring at the *High-Prieſthood*, which he had reſerv'd to *Aaron*, and his Poſterity.

DATHAN and *Abiram* were at ſome Diſtance, when *Moſes* thus talk'd with the reſt; and therefore, ſuppoſing that they had been drawn into the Conſpiracy by *Korah*'s Inſinuations, he ſent privately to them, with a Deſign to argue the Caſe more calmly with them: But, inſtead of a civil Anſwer, he receiv'd an haughty Meſſage, wherein they upbraided him with a Non-performance of his Promiſe, and "that he had decoy'd the whole Nation, "from the rich and fertile Land of "*Egypt*, under the Pretence of bringing "them into a much *better*, but, inſtead "of that, had only detain'd them in a "barren Wilderneſs, there to domineer "and tyrannize over them." At which Meſſage *Moſes* was ſo highly provok'd, that he appeal'd to God againſt the Injuſtice of it, and, at the ſame Time, requeſted of him not to regard the Prayers and Offerings of ſuch ungrateful Wretches.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xvii.

Early next Morning *Moſes* and *Aaron* went towards the Tabernacle, whither *Korah*, at the Head of his Party, with each Man a † Cenſer in his Hand, (attended with a vaſt promiſcuous Multitude, which came, in all Probability, to be Spectators of this famous Conteſt) fail'd not to repair. The firſt Thing that drew their Eyes, was, the amazing Splendor, which iſſu'd from the Cloud over the Tabernacle, from which God call'd to *Moſes* and *Aaron* to withdraw from that rebellious Crew, leſt they ſhou'd be ſwallow'd up in the Deſtruction, which he was going to bring upon them. Hereupon *Moſes*, having firſt requeſted of him not to ſlay the Innocent with the Guilty, adverti's'd the People (if they conſulted their own Safety) to ſeparate themſelves from the Company of theſe wicked Men; and then beſpake the Aſſembly to this Purpoſe: —— "That, if theſe Rebels dy'd in the "common Way of Nature, he wou'd "give them leave to call in queſtion his "*divine* Miſſion; but that, if the Earth "did immediately open itſelf in a mira-"culous Manner, and ſwallow them up "alive, he then hop'd that they wou'd "look upon him, only as an Inſtrument "in God's Hand, and ſufficiently autho-"ris'd for all he did." And no ſooner had he ended theſe Words, but the Earth clove aſunder under their Feet, and ſwallow'd them up alive, together with their Families,

† The two hundred and fifty Princes had not, as yet, offer'd any Incenſe, becauſe they were prevented by Death; however it may be preſum'd, that they had lighted their Cenſers at the *holy Fire*, by which they obtain'd (at leaſt in the Opinion of the People) a Kind of *Conſecration*: And therefore, to keep up among them a Reputation and Eſteem for Things *conſecrated*, as well as to ſhew the Difference between his own Inſtitution, and Men's Contrivances, God order'd all theſe brazen Cenſers to be wrought into broad Plates, and to cover the Altar with them; that being poliſh'd bright they might, by their Luſtre, put the People in Mind of the Offence of thoſe, who were once Owners of them, and ſo caution others againſt the like Offence. *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible, Lib. 2.

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Families, and all their Subſtance; while, at the ſame Time, *Korah*, and his Company, (who ſtood with their Cenſers before the Court of the Tabernacle) were all deſtroy'd by a miraculous Fire from Heaven: And, to perpetuate the Memory of this Judgment, as well as to deter, for the future, any, but the Sons of *Aaron*, from preſuming to burn Incenſe before the Lord, *Eliezar* was order'd to gather up the Cenſers of the Dead, and to have them beat into broad Plates for a Covering of the *Altar*.

Great Numbers ſlain by the Plague.

So terrible a Puniſhment, one wou'd think, might have been ſufficient, for ſome Time at leaſt, to have kept the *Iſraelites* within the Bounds of their Obedience; but no ſooner were they recovered, from their Fright, than they began to murmur afreſh, and to accuſe *Moſes* and *Aaron* for having *murther'd the People of the Lord*, as they were not aſham'd to call that ſeditious Crew. *Moſes* and *Aaron* were well aware of the unruly Temper of the People, and therefore, fearing to what Degree of Madneſs and Outrage they might proceed, they took Sanctuary in the Tabernacle; where they had no ſooner enter'd, but God threaten'd to deſtroy all the reſt of the Congregation, as it were, in a Moment, and had already ſent out a Plague among them; which *Aaron*, at his Brother's Directions, endeavour'd to aſſwage by his interpoſing, with a Cenſer of Incenſe, between the Dead and the Living; but the Plague, in this ſhort Time, had rag'd ſo violently, that no leſs than fourteen thouſand and ſeven hundred Perſons (beſides thoſe that periſh'd in the Sedition of *Korah*, and his Company were carry'd off by it.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

And Aaron's *Prieſthood confirm'd to him by a Miracle upon his* Rod.

THIS was enough, in all Reaſon, to eſtabliſh the Authority, *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical*, in the Hands of the two Brothers: However, to put *Aaron*'s Claim beyond all Manner of Diſpute, God was pleas'd to confirm it by one Miracle more. *Aaron*, on the one Side, and the Heads of every Tribe, on the other, were order'd to bring each Man his Rod, with their reſpective Names written upon them, and theſe were to be depoſited in the Tabernacle, until the next Morning; by which Time God wou'd decide in Favour of that Family, on whoſe Rod ſome miraculous Change ſhou'd be ſeen. Accordingly, when they came to examine them next Morning, † *Aaron*'s Rod alone was found, not only to have budded, but bloſſom'd likewiſe, and brought forth ripe Almonds: In Memory of which remarkable Deciſion, God order'd the Rod to be laid ‖ up in the *Ark of the Covenant*, and gave an expreſs Prohibition, that none, but the Sons of *Aaron*, ſhou'd preſume to come into the Tabernacle, under Pain of Death.

The

† Some will needs have this Rod of *Aaron*'s to have been the ſame with that of *Moſes*'s, wherewith he wrought ſo many Miracles in *Egypt*, and at the *Red Sea*; but there is this Argument againſt them, that the Miracle of its *Bloſſoming* had not been a ſufficient Conviction to the *Iſraelites*, if ſo be that *Aaron*'s Rod had not been of the ſame Kind with the reſt. For, whatever had come to paſs, they might have aſcrib'd it to the ſingular Quality and Virtue of the Rod (eſpecially had it been *Moſes*'s *Wonder-working* Rod) and not to the ſpecial Hand of God interpoſing to eſtabliſh the Authority of *Aaron*; whereas, on the contrary, we find that the Miracle had its intended effect, and ſilenc'd for ever the Pretences of other People to the Prieſthood. It is preſum'd therefore by ſome learned Men, that the Rods, which the ſeveral Princes brought *Moſes*, were neither their common *Walking-ſtaves*, nor any ſuch Wands, as were a Badge of their Power and Authority in their reſpective Tribes, but rather certain *Twigs*, that were cut off from ſome *Almond-Tree*, and not improbably from one and the ſame Tree, that there might be no manner of Difference between them. The Difference, however, next Morning appear'd in this: ——— That on the *Twig*, which bore *Aaron*'s Name, there was, in ſome Places, an Appearance of Buds coming forth; in others, the Buds were open'd, and ſhot forth into Bloſſoms; and in others, the Bloſſoms were knotted, and grown into Almonds. *Le Clerc*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

‖ It is made a Matter of ſome Enquiry, whether this Rod of *Aaron*'s was put within the Ark of the Covenant, or only *by* it. God commanded *Moſes* to put it only in the Tabernacle (*Numb.* xvii. 4.) to be preſerv'd there; but St *Paul*, in *Heb.* ix. 4. ſays, that it was plac'd *within* the Ark, with a Pot of Manna, and the Tables of the Law: Others affirm, that it was not put *within*, but only *by the Side* of the Ark; and for their Opinion they alledge a Paſſage, in 1 *Kings* viii. 9. which ſeems to intimate that there was nothing in the Ark, but the Tables of the Law: But then their Adverſaries contend, that St *Paul*, in that Paſſage to the *Hebrews*, is to be underſtood *literally*; that there cou'd be no Hindrance for its being put into the Ark, ſince the Ark was five Feet long, and cou'd not but be

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From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

The OBJECTION.

" *MOSES*, no doubt was a peculiar Favourite of God, and his " Admiſſion to an intimate Converſation " with him, on the *ſacred* Mount, was " a Vouchſafement of an extraordinary " Nature; but it ſeems a little irrecon- " cileable to our Thoughts, how human " Nature, in its preſent Situation, cou'd " be able to ſubſiſt *forty Days and forty* " *Nights* without any Manner of Suſte- " nance; nor can we conceive, how the " Countenance of *Moſes* came to contract " a bright and radiant Luſtre, by con- " verſing with the Deity, at this Time, " more than it did, when he went up " to the Mount before. The *Iſraelites*, " without all Queſtion, were a very ob- " ſtinate and perverſe Sort of People; " but (to magnify himſelf) *Moſes* ſeems " to have repreſented them in blacker Co- " lours, than they did deſerve; becauſe " it is hardly to be imagin'd, how they " cou'd, after having been *Eye-Witneſſes* " of ſo many Miracles wrought for their " Preſervation, go on ſtill in diſtruſting, " and complaining of God; nor can we " deviſe any Reaſon, why they were not " puniſh'd a Year before, as well as *now*, " for *aſking Fleſh for their Luſts*, ſince, " at both Times, their Crime was equal- " ly the ſame.

" *(d) God's Hand cannot wax ſhort*, as " himſelf told *Moſes*, neither can his Pow- " er admit of any Diminution; and yet " it ſeems to ſavour of ſome Defect in " that Reſpect, and to be a Derogation " from the Greatneſs of the Miracle, that " we find *Quails* (which they had before) " ſent here again, upon their ſecond Com- " plaint. Quails, no doubt, are excellent " Food; but a *Diverſity*, one wou'd " think, had been more agreeable to the " *Generality*, and more expreſſive of God's " Sovereignty over the World; becauſe a " *Repetition* of the ſame Diet to a People " he was minded to gratify, ſeems as in- " congruous a Thing in him, as it wou'd " be in a *Clerk of the Kitchen* to be always " ſending up the *ſame Bill of Fare*.

" *(e) Whatever goeth in at the Mouth*, " we muſt allow, *defileth not the Man*; " and therefore we may juſtly wonder, " why God ſhou'd exact *(f)* a Prohibition " of ſeveral Kinds of Food, which have " no Relation to inward *Purity*, and to " many of which Mankind ſeem to have " a natural Averſion, without a divine " Interdiction: And tho' the *Apoſtle* to " the *Hebrews* has inform'd us, that " ſeveral Things, relating to the *Taber-* " *nacle*-Service, were Types of *Chriſt*, " yet we are ſtill at a Loſs to know, why " the great *Myſteries* of Man's Redemp- " tion ſhou'd be *prenotify'd* by ſuch dark " *Shadows* and *Emblems*, and not rather " diſcover'd in the plaineſt *Predictions* " and Expreſſions imaginable.

" GRIEF for the untimely Death of " a Child is what a good-natur'd Parent " cannot refrain, and therefore how much " ſoever we may ſuppoſe, that the two " young Men, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, de- " ſerv'd to ſuffer for their Indiſcretion; " yet it ſeems to be an unreaſonable Re- " ſtraint upon the innate Paſſions of hu- " man Nature, for God to forbid *Aaron* " to

of Capacity enough to hold it; and therefore, when the Scripture ſays, that there was nothing in the Ark but the Tables of the Law, they conceive that it may be underſtood with this Limitation: ——That nothing elſe was, *originally* in it, becauſe the Ark was *primarily* intended for that Uſe; but this need not hinder but that, afterwards other Things likewiſe might be put in it. How long this wonderful Rod continu'd in this *Repoſitory*, is no where mention'd in Scripture. When the Ark was brought into *Solomon*'s Temple, 1 *Kings* viii. 9. there is no Notice taken of it; and yet it ſeems reaſonable to think, that it ſhou'd have been preſerv'd for ſome conſiderable Time, and preſerv'd in that very *Verdure*, wherein it now appear'd, with its Buds, Bloſſoms, and Fruit, for the Conviction of Poſterity. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Rod*.

(d) Numb. xi. 23. *(e)* Matth. xv. 17, 20. *(f)* Lev. xi. 13.

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" to make any Moan or Lamentation for " them. Nor can we think it any In- " ſtance of *Moſes*'s Prudence and Modeſty, " to commend himſelf ſo highly *for being* " *very meek, above all the Men that were* " *upon the Face of the Earth*, or to relate " the Difference between him, and his " Brother and Siſter, who ſeem to have " had ſufficient Reaſon to quarrel with " him, for marrying another *Ethiopian* " Woman, and ſo diſgracing their Fa- " mily, by a baſe and *idolatrous* Alli- " ance.

" FIT however it was to bring the " Matter to a ſpeedy Accommodation, " otherwiſe the Defection of *Korah* might " have prov'd more dangerous, and the " Juggle of *Aaron's fructifying* Rod " (which, according to the Hiſtory, was " certainly under *Moſes*'s Management, " and who, by Sleight of Hand, might ea- " ſily have ſubſtituted an Almond Branch " in the room of it) cou'd not have been " carry'd on ſo dextrouſly. But to make " Almighty God interpoſe in a Family- " Quarrel, and condeſcend ſo far, as to " call the ſeveral Parties before him, is " certainly debaſing the divine Majeſty, " and giving it an Employ a little below " its Dignity."

Anſwer'd, by ſhewing the Reaſons of Moſes's *Faſting.*

IN this State of our Infirmity indeed, we are oblig'd to repair the gradual Decays of our Bodies with a Supply of daily Food; but in that of a greater Perfection, there will be no Occaſion for theſe weak Supports of human Nature. In the mean Time we are aſſur'd, that *(g) Man doth not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God*, by whoſe Command our natural *Perſpiration* may be ſo ſhut up, and the Inſtruments of our *Digeſtion* ſo retarded, as to make a ſmall Quantity of Meat ſubſiſt us for a conſiderable Time. *Elijah*, we read, had *(h)* but *a Cake baken on the Coals*, and a *Cruſe of Water* for his whole Repaſt, even when he was going to undertake a long Journey; and yet we find, that both under the Fatigue of Body, and Expence of Spirits, which Travelling muſt neceſſarily occaſion, he was enabled to *go in the Strength of that Meat forty Days and forty Nights.* And for the like Reaſons we may ſuppoſe, that *Moſes* being now receiv'd within the Cloud on Mount *Sinai*, might find no uneaſy Cravings of Appetite, during his Stay, and long Converſation with God. From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

THE *Jews* have a Proverb with Relation to this long Faſting of his, *(i)* which tends to this Purpoſe, " that *above*, where " there is neither Eating nor Drinking, " *Moſes* ſtay'd eighty Days, *(viz.* at two " different Times) and became like the " Angels; and *below*, where Men do eat " and drink, *miniſtering* Angels come " down, and eat and drink, like them." Whereby they ſeem to impute this Alteration of Appetite in both to a Change of *Climate*, rather than a *Miracle*. But whether the Climate contributes to it or no, it is certain, that God, by Influences and Emanations from himſelf, can ſupport a Man, as long as he thinks fit, and keep up his Spirits in their juſt Height, without the common Recruits of any Kind of Aliment.

IT is another Notion of the *Jews*, *(k)* that as Eating and Drinking are Actions, which prejudice the Underſtanding, God, who intended to prepare his *Servant* for the Reception of the Revelations he was going to communicate, withheld all Meat and Drink from him, that, by depreſſing his *bodily* Faculties, he might exalt his *intellectual*. In the Caſe of *Daniel*, it is certain, that, in order to diſpoſe him for the heavenly Viſion, *(l) he did eat no pleaſant Bread, neither came Fleſh or Wine in his Mouth, for three whole Weeks together*, as himſelf teſtifies: And therefore, conſidering the many wonderful Things, which God intended to impart to *Moſes*, there ſeems to be a *Propriety* at leaſt, if not an abſolute *Neceſſity*, of his being put under the like *Regimen*, to enable him,

(g) Matt. iv. 4. *(h)* 1 Kings xix. 6, 8. *(i)* Vid. *Buxtorf.* *(k)* *Patrick's* Commentary. *(l)* Dan. x. 3.

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him, with more Facility, to comprehend them.

St *PAUL* is ſuppos'd to ſpeak of himſelf, (though Modeſty makes him conceal it) when he expreſſes his Viſions in theſe Words:——*(m) I knew a Man in Chriſt, above fourteen Years ago, (whether in the Body, I cannot tell, or out of the Body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) ſuch an one caught up to the third Heaven; and I knew ſuch a Man (whether in the Body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) how he was caught up into Paradiſe, and heard unſpeakable Words, which it is not lawful*, or (as the marginal Note has it) *not poſſible for Man to utter*. Now, wherever the divine *Preſence* is, there is *Paradiſe*, and there is *Heaven*: And therefore if St *Paul*, when he was in a Viſion, and thought himſelf tranſlated to the Regions above, in the Contemplation of the wonderful Things, he ſaw and heard there, loſt all Senſe of his Body, and Perception of its Affections; why may we not ſuppoſe, that the Joy and Exſtaſy, wherewith *Moſes* was tranſported, upon the like Occaſion, made him never think of once eating or drinking?

A Man muſt be a Stranger to deep Study and Meditation, who has not experienc'd in himſelf a total Forgetfulneſs, for ſome Time, not only of the *nimble Minutes*, as they paſs'd away, but of the *Neceſſities of Nature* likewiſe, as they came upon him: and even found, at length, that his Recollection, and Senſation of theſe Things, proceeded from an Imbecillity of his Mind, which was not able to endure a continu'd Intention, or Stretch of Thought, more than any natural *Call*, which ſeems to have been ſuſpended, as long as his ſuperior Faculties were thus agreeably employ'd. With much more Reaſon therefore we may conclude, that, in the Preſence of God, where the Mind might be impregnated with a Power to ſuſtain the Fatigue of cloſe, perpetual Thinking, the Variety of Objects, which preſented themſelves, wou'd be ſo great, and the Entertainment of its intellectual Faculties ſo very ſtrong, as wou'd quite abſorb all corporal Deſires and Appetites. From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Had *Moſes* therefore been employ'd in no farther Capacity, than barely in contemplating the many amazing Wonders of God's infinite *Being*, which the Irraditions from his *beatifick* Preſence muſt have transfus'd upon his Mind; this had been enough to ſuſpend all other Operations, and engroſs, as it were, the whole *Complex* of his Faculties. But beſides this, the Scripture informs us, that *(n)* he took a Review of the *Model* of the Tabernacle, and its Furniture, which God had ſhewn him when he was with him before, and (as we may ſuppoſe) receiv'd *freſh* Inſtructions from God. This cou'd not but take up ſome Proportion of his Time; as moſt of the Remainder of it ſeems to have been ſpent in *(o)* Prayer and Interceſſion with God for the People, that he wou'd reſtore them entirely to his Favour, and bring them, in his good appointed Time, to their Inheritance.

Upon the whole therefore it appears, that as *Moſes* was in the *Preſence* of God all the while that he continu'd on the *Mount*; had a full *Employ* for his Mind and Thoughts, during that Time; and, by the divine Influence, had his *Spirits* ſuſtain'd in their proper Height, and his *animal* Part preſerv'd without waſting; he cou'd have no Leiſure to think of eating and drinking, or, that (had he thought thereon) he cou'd find in himſelf no *Call* or Occaſion for it.

Why Moſes's *Face did not ſhine, at the* firſt *going up to the* Mount.

The Word *Karan*, which our Tranſlators have made *ſhining*, is by the *Vulgat* render'd *cornutus*, or *horned*; and, from this Miſapplication of Ideas, *Painters* very probably have been induc'd to draw *Moſes* with a Pair of Horns branching, as it were, out of his Forehead; whereas the proper Repreſentation of him ſhou'd be, with a *Glory*, covering his Head, in the Manner that the Saints are painted in the *Roman*

(m) 2 Cor. xii. 2, &c. *(n)* From the Beginning of the xxvth Chapter of *Exodus* to the End of the xxxth Chapter. *(o)* Deut. ix. 18, 19, 25, 26, and x. 10.

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Roman Church: For it is not improbable, that the Hair of his Head was interſpers'd with Rays of Light, at the ſame Time that a certain beauteous Luſtre proceeded from his Face, and dazzled the Eyes of its Beholders.

MOSES was certainly in this, as well as many other Things, an eminent *Type* of our Saviour *Chriſt*, and the *Change* of his Countenance an *Emblem* of our Lord's *Transfiguration* upon the Mount, when *(p) his Face* (as the *Evangeliſt* relates the Matter) did *ſhine as the Sun, and his Raiment was white as the Light*. In both Caſes, it was the glorious *Being (q)* within the Cloud, that transfus'd this radiant Splendor around his *Son* and *Servant:* But the Reaſon, why *Moſes*, at his firſt Time of being upon the Mount, and converſing with God, did not contract this wonderful Brightneſs, ſeems to be this; —— That he had not then ſeen the *Divine Majeſty* in ſo great a Splendor, as he did now. He was oblig'd then to keep at a more awful Diſtance from the tremenduous *Throne* of God, and not come within the *Circle* of its Refulgency; but now, upon his humble Petition, God was pleas'd to vouchſafe him ſuch a Sight of his *Glory*, as his human Nature cou'd bear. So that, by being permitted to come within the Circumference of it, he carry'd off (tho' unknown to himſelf) * ſuch a *beamy Luſtre* from the divine *Refulgency*, as (like the *lambent Fire*, wherewith the Poets adorn the Temples of their *Heroes) play'd* about his Head and Face, and there was permanent for ſome conſiderable Time: For, *Moſes* being now to bring down the Tables of the *Covenant* from the Mount, that the People might not ſuſpect him of any Fallacy or Colluſion, or think that his Pretence to a Correſpondence with the *Deity* (as that of ſome ſubſequent Lawgivers prov'd) was vain and fictitious, God was pleas'd to ſend along with him this *Teſtimony*, as it were, of his having held Communion with God. For the miraculous *Radiancy*, wherewith he was adorn'd, ſhew'd in what Company he had been during his Abſence; confirm'd his Meſſage to the People; and, in every Reſpect, carry'd new *Credentials* in it.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

IT may ſeem a little ſtrange indeed, why a People, ſo immediately under the Guidance of God, ſhou'd, every Day, ſtand in need of ſo many new *Credentials*, and, upon every little Emergency, fall a murmuring and rebelling againſt the God of *Iſrael*, and his Servant *Moſes*. St *Stephen*, in quoting the Prophet *Amos*, has let us into the Cauſe of this People's frequent Prevarications: *(r) O ye Houſe of* Iſrael, *have ye offered to me ſlain Beaſts and Sacrifices, by the Space of forty Years in the Wilderneſs? Yea, ye took up the Tabernacle of* Moloch, ‡ *and the Star of your God* Remphan, *Figures which ye made to worſhip them.* By *Moloch* the Learned are pretty well agreed, that we are

Why the Iſraelites *were ſo apt to murmur and mutiny.*

(p) Matth. xvii. 2. *(q)* Ver. 5.

* It was a Cuſtom among the antient *Heathens*, and probably deriv'd from what here befel *Moſes* to repreſent the Gods with a *beamy Glory* around their Heads, ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ ἀκτῖνας φορεῖν, *to carry Rays about their Heads*, as *Lucian de Deâ Syriâ* has it: And hence it was, that the *Roman Emperors*, who were rais'd ſo much above the reſt of Mankind, that they were honour'd as a Sort of *Deities*, were thus repreſented; as appears from the Teſtimony of *Pliny*, (among many more) who, in his *Panegyrick* to *Trajan*, makes the *Radiatum Domitiani Caput* the Subject of ſome Banter. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

(r) Acts vii. 42, 43.

‡ Thus the *Septuagint*, from whom St *Stephen* took this Paſſage in *Amos*, tranſlate *it*; but the Import of the *Hebrew* Text is this, *Ye have borne the Tabernacle of your Kings, and the Pedeſtal* (ſo the Word *Chiun* ſignifies) *of your Images, the Star of your Gods, which ye made to yourſelves.* So that it ſeems very probable, that the LXX read *Rephan* or *Revan*, inſtead of *Chiun* or *Chevan*, and thereby miſtook the *Pedeſtal* for a *God*. *Kircher*, however, and *Salmaſius* aſſert, that *Kijon* is *Saturn*; that his Star is call'd *Keiran* among the *Perſians* and *Arabians*, and that *Remphan*, or *Rephan*, ſignify'd the ſame Thing among the *Egyptians*; and therefore they ſuppoſe, that the *Septuagint*, who made their Tranſlation in *Egypt*, chang'd the Word *Chiun*, into that of *Remphan*, becauſe they had the ſame Signification. *Remphan* is generally ſuppos'd to have been an *Egyptian* God; and *Hammond*, in his Notes upon *Acts* vii. 43. is of Opinion, that this was the Name of a certain King of *Egypt*, who, after his Death, was deify'd by his Subjects: But of what Make and Figure the Image of this *Idol* was, or in what Manner he was worſhipp'd, we can no where learn. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Words *Chiun* and *Remphan*.

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are to underſtand the Image of the *Sun*, and by *Remphan*, that of the Planet *Saturn*; and that the Worſhip of theſe Idols was a common Thing among the *Iſraelites*, in the Time of their Sojourning in the Wilderneſs, is manifeſt from that Paſſage of the *Prophet*, where he introduces God, thus complaining of the Perverſeneſs of that People: *(s) In the Day, that I choſe* Iſrael, *and lifted my Hand unto the Seed of the Houſe of* Jacob, *to bring them forth out of the Land of* Egypt, *unto a Land that I had eſpied for them, flowing with Milk and Honey, then ſaid I unto them,* "*Caſt ye away every Man the Abomina-*" *tions of his Eyes, and defile not yourſelves* "*with the Idols of* Egypt: *I am the* "*Lord your God.*" *But they rebelled againſt me, and would not hearken unto me; they did not every Man caſt away the Abominations of their Eyes, neither did they forſake the Idols of* Egypt. Nay, ſo far were they from forſaking the Idols of *Egypt*, that we find them adopting ſtrange Gods from every other neighbouring Nation, which occaſion'd that ſevere Commination in God: *(t) I will ſet my Face againſt that Man, and will cut him off from among his People, becauſe he has given of his Seed unto* † Moloch, *to defile my Sanctuary, and to profane my holy Name.* And if any one fail to puniſh this Idolater, *then will I ſet my Face*, ſays God, *againſt that Man, and againſt his Family, and will cut him off, and all, that go a whoring after him, from among their People.*

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Now if Idolatry was a Practice, which the *Iſraelites* retain'd, and, in ſome Inſtances, improv'd, after their Departure out of *Egypt*, there is great Reaſon to preſume, that theſe *Idolaters* were the very *Murmurers* alſo, who infected the Camp with their *Infidelity*. They might believe (becauſe they ſaw ſo many Manifeſtations of it) the Reſidence of a God amongſt them; but then it is not unlikely, that they thought of him (as moſt of the *Heathens* thought of their Gods) that he was a *local* and *limited* Deity, who had done ſomething for them indeed, but cou'd not do all they wanted; who had brought them into the *Wilderneſs*, but had not the Power to conduct them into *Canaan*.

In this Manner it is, that the *Pſalmiſt* repreſents them reaſoning with themſelves: *(u) Shall this God of ours prepare us a Table in the Wilderneſs? He ſmote the ſtony Rock indeed, that the Water guſhed out, and the Streams flowed withal; but can he give Bread alſo, and provide Fleſh for his People?* Many of theſe Miracles they ſaw wrought before their Eyes; but then they might look upon *Moſes*, who did them, *(x)* to be no more than a mere *Magician*, though perhaps of a better Sort, than thoſe of *Egypt*; and, conſequently, might be apprehenſive, that, upon every new Turn and Exigence, his Art wou'd fail him: And therefore, having no better Notions of God, and ſo groſs a Conception of their *Leader*, it is no Manner of Wonder that they ran into Murmuring and Diſcontent, into Riot and Diſorder, upon

(s) Ezek. xx. 5, &c. *(t)* Lev. xx. 3, &c.

† The *Rabbins* aſſure us, that the Idol *Moloch* (which was the ſame as *Baal*, the *Sun*, or Lord of Heaven, worſhipp'd by all the People in the *Eaſt*) had its Image made of Braſs, ſitting upon a Throne of the ſame Metal, having the Head of a Calf, adorn'd with a royal Crown, and his Arms extended, as it were, to embrace any Thing: But what the Children's *paſſing through the Fire* means, they are not ſo well agreed. Some of them are of Opinion, that Parents, in the Worſhip of this Idol, did not actually burn their Children, but only caus'd them to leap through a Fire that was lighted before it, or to paſs between two Fires plac'd oppoſite to each other, by Way of Luſtration; but the Expreſſions of *David* are a little too ſtrong to admit of this Interpretation. For, when he tells us, that *they ſacrificed their Sons and Daughters unto Devils*, and *that they ſhed innocent Blood, even the Blood of their Sons and Daughters, whom they ſacrific'd to the Idols of* Canaan, *Pſal.* cvi. 37, 38. we cannot but infer, that they did actually murder their Children in this execrable Way.——When any Infants were to be ſacrific'd, the Idol was made hot by kindling a great Fire in the Inſide of it; and when it was heated to a moſt intenſe Degree, the miſerable Victim was put into its Arms, and ſoon conſum'd by the Violence of the Heat; but, that the Cries of the Children might not be heard in their Extremities, the People were wont to make a great Noiſe with Drums, and other Inſtruments, about the Idol. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, and Diſſertations.

(u) Pſal. lxxviii. 20, 21. *(x)* *Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. IV. Occaſ. Annot. 5.

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upon every little Difficulty, that preſs'd them.

Why God ſent Quails *among them twice.*

Two Times we find them complaining for the Want of ſuch Food, as they deſir'd; once *(y)* in the Wilderneſs of *Sin*, a few Days after their Paſſage of the *Red-Sea*, and again, at the Encampment *(z)* of *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, not long after their Departure from Mount *Sinai*; and, at both of theſe Times, God thought proper to ſend them *Quails*: Not out of any Deſtitution or Scarcity of other Proviſion, *(for (a) all the Beaſts of the Foreſt are his, and ſo are the Cattle upon a thouſand Hills; he knows all the Fowls upon the Mountains, and the wild Beaſts of the Field are in his Sight)* but for this very Reaſon,——That, how willing ſoever he might be to ſupply his People's Neceſſities, he had no Deſign to pamper their Appetites with a needleſs Variety, or to multiply Miracles without any juſt Occaſion. And therefore, as both theſe Events happen'd in the *Spring*, when Quails (which are found in great Quantities upon the Coaſts of the *Red-Sea)* are accuſtom'd to paſs from *Aſia* into *Europe*, God caus'd a Wind to ariſe, which, in their Flight, drove them towards the Camp of the *Iſraelites*, and *(b)* (as the *Eaſtern* Tradition has it) was ſo very *violent*, that it broke their Wings, and made them fall at a convenient Diſtance, and in a proper Condition to be taken up.

THAT *Quails*, among us, are very excellent Food, cannot be deny'd; but the ſame Tradition informs us, that theſe Birds, in *Arabia Fælix*, do vaſtly ſurpaſs all others, and (as our Author expreſſes it) have *neither Bones, Veins, nor Sinews in them*, i. e. are very fat and tender, ſomething like our *Fig-peckers* and *Ortolans*. And therefore, tho' God refus'd to gratify their Palates with a profuſe Variety of Dainties, yet is there no Fault to be found with his Proviſion, ſince the Food he ſent them was delicious in its Kind, and a whole Year had now interven'd between the former and latter Flight of *Quails*, to *whet* their Appetites, and prevent any Danger of being cloy'd with the ſame Diſh.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Why he was angry at their ſecond Murmuring, tho' not at the firſt.

SOMETHING however there was in their Behaviour, which provok'd God, in this their *latter*, more than their *former* Complaint for want of Fleſh, to puniſh them ſo ſeverely. *(c)* The Deſire of Fleſh for Food is, in itſelf, but *natural*, and, abſolutely ſpeaking, far from being *criminal*, or provoking to the Author of Nature, who created every Appetite of Man, as well as his Underſtanding: But when this breaks out into Murmuring, Mutiny, and Diſorder, the Caſe is then entirely alter'd. In the *former* of theſe Caſes, the People were in Want of Bread, and really pinch'd with Hunger; but, in the *latter*, they had *Bread from Heaven* in Abundance, and may therefore be ſaid to complain not out of *Need*, but *Wantonneſs*. Their Diſcontent in the former Caſe was expreſs'd comparatively, in modeſt Terms; but here their Tone is, *(d) Who ſhall give us Fleſh to eat? We remember the Fiſh, which we did eat in* Egypt *freely, the Cucumbers, and the Melons, and the Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick; but now our Soul is dried away; there is nothing at all, beſides this Manna, before our Eyes.* This ſame Contempt of the *Manna*, which God ſo miraculouſly ſent from Heaven, eſpecially in Perſons ſo well inſtructed in the divine Will, was ſuch an Inſtance of Baſeneſs and Ingratitude, as juſtly deſerv'd the Puniſhment it met with.

IN the former Time of their Complaining, God wink'd at their Ignorance, and pitied their Diſtreſs: He had not then given them his Laws for the Rule of their Actions and Appetites, and therefore, never looking *to reap, where he had not ſowed*, he was not ſo *extream as to mark what they had done amiſs*; but, after he had publiſh'd his Precepts from the *Holy Mount*, and many more Inſtructions from the

(y) Exod. xvi. 3, 13. *(z)* Numb. xi. 34. *(a)* Pſal. l. 10, 11. *(b)* Vid. Bibl. Orient. P. 749. Col. 1. *(c) Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. IV. Occaſ. Annot. 3. *(d)* Numb. xi. 5, &c.

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the *Tabernacle*, he then expected that their Obedience ſhou'd keep pace with their Knowlege, and was more provok'd at their Backſlidings, than before, becauſe they proceeded not from the Ignorance of their *Minds*, but the Perverſeneſs of their *Wills:* For, this was the true and the juſt Cauſe of their *(e) Condemnation, that*, even when *Light* was *come into the World, they loved Darkneſs rather than Light, becauſe their Deeds were evil.*

Why he prohibited the Uſe of certain Animals *for Food.*

In the 11th Chapter of the Book of *Leviticus*, we have a Catalogue of the Beaſts, Fiſhes, and Fowls, which God either permitted, or prohibited the *Iſraelites* to eat. From his firſt making Choice of them, God's Purpoſe was to diſtinguiſh them from other Nations, and more eſpecially from the *Egyptians*, among whom they had long liv'd, had contracted their Manners, and were too tenacious of their Cuſtoms: And therefore, in Oppoſition to theſe, he enjoin'd them to eat ſuch Creatures, as were worſhipp'd in *Egypt*, which wou'd be an effectual Means to render the Pretences of theſe *ſham* Deities contemptible; as, on the contrary, he order'd them to abſtain from *thoſe*, that were held in the greateſt Delicacy among them. And, becauſe the *Egyptians* wou'd have nothing to do with ſuch Animals, as had *Hoofs* and *Horns*; the *Jews* were allow'd to eat none, but what *parted the Hoof*, as well as *chew'd the Cud.*

It is to be obſerv'd farther, that, in the very *Make* and *Nature* of ſome Animals, there are certain *Qualities*, which prejudice Mankind againſt them, and ſeem, as it were, to *deſecrate* their Uſe; that ſome, for Inſtance are monſtrouſly big, others very ugly and deform'd; ſome come from *heterogeneous* Mixtures, others feed upon dead Bodies; and to others moſt Men have an inbred Antipathy; ſo that, in the Main, what the Law forbad the *Jews* in this Regard, was Nature's Averſion before: But then the Queſtion is——Why the Things, which they were naturally averſe to, and wou'd have refrain'd without it, were made the Matter of a divine *Interdiction?* From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Now, if we trace the Hiſtory of theſe People, we ſhall find, that they had their Seaſons of Affliction and Scarcity, as well as of Proſperity and Plenty. At the very Time, when theſe Prohibitions were given them, they were travelling, and were to continue travelling, for many Years in a waſte and barren *Deſart*, which, being deſtitute of the Conveniences and Neceſſaries of Life, might tempt them to make Experiment upon the Fleſh of ſome of thoſe Animals, that they naturally abhorr'd, but, upon this Occaſion, as they thought might innocently make uſe of: And therefore, to ſet a ſtronger Guard upon human Nature, God thought proper to confirm this their innate Averſion, by the Sanction and Eſtabliſhment of Laws, which were to laſt beyond the Term of their Continuance in the Wilderneſs.

The Truth is, this People, by their groſs Impieties, and Prevarications with God, brought frequently upon themſelves Famines, and Sieges, and other Calamities, wherein they ſuffer'd very grievouſly. To paſs by the Famines, which happen'd, *(f)* in *Judea*, *(g)* in the Time of the *Judges*, and *(h)* in *David*'s Days; in the Reign of *Ahab*, there was *(i)* a dreadful one in *Samaria*, when an *Aſs's Head was ſold for foreſcore Pieces of Silver, and the fourth Part of a Cab of Doves-Dung* (it ſhou'd be render'd *Pulſe*) *for five Pieces of Silver*; and (what is more lamentable ſtill) when Mothers enter'd into Compact about eating their own Children. But the moſt *tragical* Account of all is that, which their own Hiſtorian has recorded of them, at the Siege of *Jeruſalem* by *Titus*, when Wives ſnatch'd the Neceſſaries of Life from their Huſbands, Children from their Parents, and Parents from their Children; *(k)* when *Mothers* were forc'd, for their own Support, to defraud their *Infants* of the little *Milk*, that was in their Breaſts, while

(e) John iii. 19. *(f) Bibliotheca Bibl.* Vol. III. Occaſional Annot. 3. *(g)* Ruth i. 1. *(h)* 2 Sam. xxi. 1. *(i)* 2 Kings vi. 25. *(k) Joſeph.* de Bello Jud. Lib. v. c. 10.

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while the *Infants* were dying in their Arms for Want of it; when Hunger and Neceſſity turn'd every Thing into Victuals, and (what is ſhocking to human Nature but barely to think on) *(l)* made one *Jewiſh* Lady of Quality eat her own Child.

Now the Uſe, that I wou'd make of this melancholy Part of their Hiſtory, is this:—— That, as to God's Preſcience, were preſent from Everlaſting all the Wickedneſſes and Rebellions of this People; ſo were thoſe Penalties and Judgments, which his infinite Wiſdom determin'd to be moſt ſuitable to them. For what Method can be thought more proper, to make an Impreſſion upon thoſe that forſake God, than that he ſhou'd forſake them, *i. e.* ſo far, at leaſt, as to withdraw the Succours of Life from them? And, conſidering his Prohibition of certain Animals for Food under this View, it was certainly a kind and generous Warning to his People, not to bring themſelves, in Conſequence of theſe Provocations, (which he foreknew, and againſt which he had ſo ſtrictly caution'd them) into ſuch Circumſtances, as wou'd oblige them, either to forbear the very laſt Means of ſuſtaining Life, or to break more of God's Commandments, than they had done before.

BUT there is a farther Reaſon, ariſing from the Quality of Animals, why God might enact a Diſcrimination of Meats, and that is —— to give his People therein a *myſtical Syſtem of Morality*. Thus the Birds, which were allow'd to be eaten, (the Pigeon, the Dove, the Partridge, for Inſtance) were either tame, or of a gentle Nature, feeding on Grain or Pulſe; whereas all the *Species*, that liv'd on Prey, and ſuch as gorge themſelves with Fleſh and Blood, were utterly forbidden, thereby to bring into Reputation Juſtice, and Mercy, and Moderation, and, at the ſame Time, to diſcountenance the contrary Diſpoſition to Rapine, Oppreſſion, and Cruelty. It is a noted *Allegory*, That in *Homer*, of *Circe*'s changing *Ulyſſes*'s Friends into Hogs. By *Circe*, the Poet intends that we ſhou'd underſtand *ſenſual Pleaſures*; by *Ulyſſes*, *Reaſon* and *Diſcretion*; and by his *Retinue*, the inferior Faculties and Powers: And, in like Manner, the Prohibition of Swines Fleſh was deſign'd to reſtrain the *Jews* from ſuch Luſts, as *war againſt the Spirit*, as pollute and debaſe human Nature, like another Creature's *Wallowing* in the Mire: For (as a learned Author obſerves) *(m)* the *Jewiſh* Law was more remarkably ſtrict in its Prohibitions of Things, that were ſordid and ſlovenly; wherein it ſeems to have had an eſpecial Aim to the training and forming of a People, that had liv'd uncultivated, by Reaſon of their long Slavery in *Egypt*, and their dirty Work in Clay and Bricks, to an Elegancy and Politeneſs of Manners, as well as a Deteſtation of all filthy and brutal *Luſts*, that, *being ſet free from Sin*, (as the Apoſtle expreſſes it) *(n) they might glorify God in Purity and Holineſs, both in their Bodies, and in their Spirits, which were his.*

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

THE ſame Apoſtle, in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, has inform'd us, *that (o) the Law made nothing perfect, but the Bringing in of a better Hope, by which we draw nigh unto God, did.* The *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt was a Type of our bleſſed Saviour, and his Entrance into the *Holy of Holies*, of our Lord's Aſcenſion into Heaven, after his Reſurrection. The Sacrifices, which were offer'd under the *Levitical* Law, were previous Repreſentations of the Death of Chriſt; and the Redemption of Mankind by the Effuſion of his Blood was exhibited, every Day, in the ſeveral Oblations in the Tabernacle: *(p) For if the Blood of Bulls, and of Goats, and the Aſhes of a Heifer, ſprinkling the Unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the Fleſh; how much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who,*

Why God made uſe of Types in the Jewiſh *Service.*

(l) Joſeph. de Bello Jud. Lib. vi. c. 3. *(m) Spencer*, de Legibus Heb. *(n)* 1 Cor. vi. 20.
(o) Chap. vii. 19. *(p)* Heb. ix 13.

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who, through the eternal Spirit, offer'd himſelf without Spot to God, purge the Conſcience from dead Works, to ſerve the living God? Now, beſides the Arguments, which might be drawn from the *Groſſneſs* of the *Jews* Underſtanding, and their Incapacity to receive a more *ſpiritual* Diſpenſation, God might have this farther Deſign in ſetting before them the *Myſtery* of Man's Redemption under ſuch *typical* Repreſentations, *viz.* that thereby he might excite their Induſtry, and give a fuller Scope to the Exerciſe of their Faith. For, that the Faith, and Hope, and other Graces of the Patriarchs, and devout *Jews*, were more effectually prov'd by the Exhibition of Things ambiguous and obſcure, than if they had been altogether open'd in the fulleſt and plaineſt Propoſitions, is a Matter that can hardly be conteſted. To reſt aſſur'd, that God wou'd bring to paſs what he had expreſly and circumſtantially foretold, ſhew'd indeed a ſincere and true Faith in *general*; but to be perſuaded, that faint Reſemblances and the remoteſt Hints were pregnant with Certainty and Solidity, and wou'd, in their proper Time, be glorioufly compleated, (how unintelligible ſoever they might be at preſent) was (if we may ſo call it) a *ſpecial Advance of heroick Faith*, and render'd their Dependance and Reſignation as compleat as poſſible. And accordingly, the *Apoſtle*, having enumerated ſeveral ancient *Worthies*, who, by Faith, extended their Views, and look'd upon the Diſpenſation they were under, as no more than a *Syſtem* of Types and *Shadows of the good Things to come*, concludes their Character in the following Manner: *(q) And theſe all, having obtained a good Report through Faith, received not the Promiſe: God having provided ſome better Thing for us, that they without us ſhou'd not be made perfect.* So that the *Jewiſh* Religion and Worſhip was, in ſome Reſpects, adapted to the Capacity and Genius both of the *Learned* and *Ignorant*: Of the *Ignorant*, as being made up of Pomp and Shew enough to attract their *Attention*; and of the *Learned*, as abounding with *Shadows*, and *Emblems* of higher Matters, enough to exerciſe their deepeſt *Contemplation*.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

The Nature of Nadab and Abihu's Tranſgreſſion.

WHAT the Sin of *offering ſtrange Fire before the Lord was*, and, upon what Account it rais'd the divine Indignation againſt *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the two Sons of *Aaron*, will beſt appear, by attending a little to the probable Occaſion of it. After the Conſecration of *Aaron* and his Sons to the prieſtly Office, we are told, that a miraculous *Fire from the Lord*, i. e. a Fire which either came immediately down from Heaven, or out of the Cloud, which cover'd the *Tabernacle*, conſum'd the firſt Victim, which *Aaron* offer'd for a Burnt-Offering; that God had expreſly commanded, that *(r) the Fire, which was upon the Altar*, ſhou'd not be ſuffer'd to *go out*, which (according to the Conſent of moſt Interpreters) ſignifies, that the ſaid miraculous Fire, which had confirm'd the Inſtallation of *Aaron* and his Sons after ſo ſurprizing a Manner, ſhou'd be kept *alive*, and burning with the utmoſt Care; and that, as at this very Fire *Aaron* was *(s)* requir'd to light the *Incenſe* which he offer'd to God *in the moſt holy Place*, on the great *Day of Expiation*; ſo may we take it for granted that the like Injunction was impos'd on the *inferior* Prieſts, with Relation to the Incenſe, which they were to offer every Day before God in the *holy Place*. We have indeed no mention made of ſuch a Law, but the Hiſtory, we are commenting upon, gives us ſtrong Preſumption, that the Uſe of this Fire *only* was permitted; and therefore the Words *(t)* in the Text, *which he commanded them not*, is thought to imply an expreſs Prohibition of *any other*.

THE Crime then of *Nadab* and *Abihu* conſiſted in their kindling the *Incenſe*, which their Office of Prieſts oblig'd them to offer every Morning and Evening, with Fire, different from that which was continually

(q) Heb. xi. 39, 40. (r) Lev. vi. 12. (s) Ibid. xvi. 12. (t) Lev. x. 1.

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tinually on the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, and conſequently, different from what God order'd them to uſe. † Other Offences indeed have been laid to their Charge. Some pretend, that they endeavour'd to intrude into the *moſt holy Place*, which was not permitted them to enter; becauſe, immediately after the Recital of the Manner of their Death, *Moſes* in another Place relates, that God commanded him to ſpeak unto *Aaron*, *(u) that he ſhou'd not come, at all Times, into the holy Place, within the Veil, before the Mercy-Seat, that he died not*; but others inſinuate, that they were guilty of Intemperance, at the Entertainment made at their *Inſtallation*, becauſe, after the Account of their fatal End, *Moſes*, by God's Order, gives this Injunction to *Aaron*, and the Remainder of his Sons: *(x) Do not drink Wine, nor ſtrong Drink, thou, nor thy Sons with thee, when ye go into the Tabernacle of the Congregation, leſt ye die. It ſhall be a Statute for ever through your Generations, that ye may put Difference between Holy and Unholy, between Unclean and Clean.* But theſe are no more than bare Surmiſes, that have no proper Foundation in the foregoing Texts, nor is there any Occaſion to hunt out for Paſſages to augment theſe Offenders Crime.

NADAB and *Abihu* had not only been admitted, in common with the reſt of their Brethren, to the Honour of the *Prieſthood*, which, among the *Jews*, was a Dignity of no ſmall Eſteem; but had particular Motives, which the others had not, to the Obſervance of all God's Commandments, as having had the Privilege of ſeeing the *Symbols* of the Divine Preſence, (on the *formidable* Mount, from whence his Laws were promulg'd) without being *conſum'd*. The higher therefore their Station was, and the more diſtinguiſhing the Favours they had receiv'd, the more provoking was their Affront, in attempting to adulterate an Ordinance of God's Inſtitution. *Common Fire*, they thought, might ſerve the Purpoſe of burning Incenſe, as well as that which was held more *ſacred:* At leaſt, in the *Gaiety*, or rather *Naughtineſs* of their Hearts, they were minded to make the Experiment, even in Oppoſition to the divine Command; and therefore *(y)* it was juſt and requiſite in God (eſpecially in the Beginning of the Prieſthood, and when one Alteration of a divine Precept might, in Proceſs of Time, be productive of many more) to inflict an *exemplary* Puniſhment, that others might *hear, and fear, and not commit the like Abomination.*

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

AND for this Reaſon, *viz.* the Injection of Terror into others, *Moſes* is commanded to make no Lamentation, or funeral Pomp for them; which, among the *Jews*, who, of all other Nations, were ſo very ſumptuous in their *Obſequies* of their deceas'd Friends, was accounted a ſore Judgment. In the Caſe of *Jehoiakim* the King of *Judah*, the Commination of God is thought very terrible: *(z) They ſhall not lament for him*, ſaying, *ah my Brother, or ah Siſter: They ſhall not lament for him*, ſaying, *ah Lord, or ah his Glory. He ſhall be buried with the Burial of an Aſs, drawn, and caſt forth beyond the Gates of* Jeruſalem. Temporal Judgments however are not always ſure Indications of the final Condemnation of the Perſons on whom they fall, and therefore *Aaron* had no Occaſion utterly to deſpond: On the contrary, he might preſume, that the Juſtice of God, being ſatisfy'd with the *preſent* Puniſhment of his Sons, might be appeas'd, with Relation to their eternal State;

Aaron's Behaviour thereupon.

† The Author of the *Connection*, ſo often cited, ſuppoſes another Kind of Innovation to have been the Occaſion of their untimely Death. God as yet, ſays he, had given no Law for the offering of Incenſe in *Cenſers*; all that had been commanded about it, was, that *Aaron* ſhou'd burn it upon *the Altar of Incenſe* every Morning and every Evening, but theſe Men took upon them to begin, and introduce a Service into Religion, which was not appointed, and which, if it had been ſuffer'd, wou'd have open'd a Door to great Irregularities; and therefore God, by an exemplary Judgment upon the firſt Offenders, put an effectual Stop to it. *Shuckford*, Vol. III. Lib. xi.

(u) Lev. xvi. 2. *(x)* Ibid. x. 9, 10. *(y)* *Le Clerc's* Commentary. *(z)* Jer. xxii. 18, 19.

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State; and that, tho' their *(a) Fleſh was deſtroyed, yet their Spirits might be ſaved in the Day of the Lord.* He knew too, how much himſelf had offended in the Matter of the *golden Calf*, and might juſtly think, that God had call'd his Sin to Remembrance in the Deſtruction of his two Sons. He acknowledg'd therefore the Righteouſneſs of God, in all that he had brought upon him, and, in the Phraſe of Scripture, *(b) was dumb, and opened not his Mouth, becauſe it was the Lord's doing.*

The Occaſion of the Difference between Moſes *and his Brother and Siſter.*

What the Occaſion of the Difference between *Moſes* and his Brother *Aaron*, and Siſter *Miriam* was, is not ſo very evident: The Hiſtory indeed tells us, that *(c) they ſpake againſt* Moſes, *becauſe of the* Ethiopian, *or rather* Arabian *Woman, whom he had married.* The Generality of Interpreters ſuppoſe this Woman to be *Zipporah*, the Daughter of *Jethro*, whom he married in *Midian*; for thoſe, who imagine her to have been another, can hardly get over this Difficulty——Why *Moſes* ſhou'd ſet ſo bad an Example, as to marry, at two ſeveral Times, a *Foreigner*, rather than one of the Daughters of his People. The firſt Time indeed, that he did ſo, was, when he liv'd in a State of *Exile*, but was nevertheleſs kindly receiv'd in a Family of the beſt Diſtinction in the Place, which might be Inducement enough for his matching himſelf with one of the Daughters, ſince no expreſs Precept againſt Matches of this Kind was then in Force. But now, that he was ſet at the Head of a People, who were to be ſeparated from the reſt of Mankind, and was conducting them into a Country, with whoſe Inhabitants they were to have no *matrimonial* Intercourſe, for fear of introducing Idolatry, it wou'd have been highly indecent, and unpopular, an Affront upon his own Country-Women, as well as a dangerous Inlet to Impiety, for him to have marry'd into an *idolatrous* Nation; nor wou'd his Brother and Siſter have been the only Perſons to clamour againſt him, but the whole *Congregation* wou'd have riſen up in Arms, upon ſo notorious a Provocation. Since therefore we hear of no ſuch Commotion, we may reaſonably conclude, that this *Cuſhite*, or *Arabian* Woman, was the ſame *Zipporah*, whom he had marry'd ſome forty Years before. But then why they ſhou'd quarrel with him upon her Account, at this Time, and no ſooner, is the Difficulty.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Now to reſolve this we muſt obſerve, that when *Jethro*, his Father-in-law, was in the Camp, it was by his Advice that *Moſes (d)* inſtituted Judges to determine leſſer Cauſes; and that he found his Son *Hobab* ſo very ſerviceable to him in the Capacity of a *Camp-maſter-general*, that ‖ he earneſtly entreated him to continue with him, and receiv'd him, no doubt, into great Confidence. It is to be obſerv'd farther, that, in the foregoing Chapter, we have an Account of the Creation of the *ſeventy Elders* to aſſiſt in the Adminiſtration, and that theſe Elders were nominated by *Moſes*, without ever conſulting *Aaron* or *Miriam*. As therefore this Story of their quarrelling with him is immediately ſubjoin'd, it ſeems very likely, that, taking themſelves to be neglected, in ſo great an Alteration made in the Government without their Advice, they were very

(a) 1 Cor. v. 5. (b) Pſal. xxxix. 9. (c) Numb. xii. 1. (d) Exod. xviii. 21, 22.

‖ *Moſes*'s Words to *Hobab* are theſe: ——— *Leave us not, I pray thee, foraſmuch as thou knoweſt how we are to encamp in the Wilderneſs, and thou mayeſt be to us inſtead of Eyes.* Numb. x. 31. But if the Being, which reſided in the miraculous Cloud, was their Guide, what Need was there for *Hobab*'s Stay? Now the Deſign of the Cloud was to direct the People when to decamp, and where to encamp again; but for the ſecuring of their Camp againſt all hoſtile Force they were left to human Means: And therefore *Hobab*, having liv'd long a Borderer upon the Wilderneſs, was well acquainted with every Part of it, and the better able to adviſe them both whence to provide themſelves with ſuch Things as they wanted, and how to ſecure themſelves againſt any neighbouring Powers, that ſhou'd attempt to aſſault them; and for theſe Reaſons *Moſes* was ſo preſſing for his ſtaying with him, though the *Septuagint* underſtand the Paſſage, as if he deſir'd him to continue to be what he had hitherto been in the Wilderneſs, *viz.* a good Adviſer, like his Father *Jethro*, and withal aſſur'd him, that he would look upon him as an *Elder*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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very angry; but, not daring to charge *Moſes* directly, they fell foul upon his Wife, giving her opprobrious Names, and complaining to the People very probably, that ſhe, and her Brother, had too much Power and Influence over *Moſes*.

Why Moſes *mentions it.*

JOSEPHUS, in his *Jewiſh* Hiſtory, makes no mention of this Family-Difference, as thinking that it might reflect Diſcredit upon his Nation; but *Moſes* was an Author of more *Veracity*, than to conceal any Action, which was proper for Mankind to know, even though it tended to the laſting Diſgrace of his own Family. For he does not affect to aggrandize the Thing, or to make his Family appear more conſiderable, when he introduces God as arbitrating the Difference between them; but purely to acquaint us, that, as the *Iſraelites* liv'd then under a *Theocracy*, God himſelf, being their *immediate* King, undertook to decide their Controverſies depending between ſuch his chief *Miniſters*, as were not accountable to any other *Judge*; nor was the divine Majeſty any more *debas'd* in condeſcending to make this Deciſion, than any earthly *Prince* wou'd be, by interpoſing his Authority to determine a Controverſy between two of his great and powerful Subjects.

Why Moſes *might commend himſelf, without endangering the* Authenticknes *of his Writings.*

MOSES indeed inſerts a Paſſage, to ſhew, that the Occaſion of this Family-Quarrel was not from him; that he was a Man of a meek and peaceable Diſpoſition, and therefore not addicted to Strife and Contention, eſpecially with thoſe of his own Kindred; and why might he not inſert this, when it was no more than what was due to his Character, and perhaps, at that Time, neceſſary for his own Vindication. St *Paul*, to clear himſelf from ſome Aſperſions, which the Malice of his Enemies had caſt upon him, enters upon his own Commendation tho' it be with ſome Reluctancy, and to give it a better *Gloſs*, tries all the Powers of Eloquence in working it up. *(e) Whereinſoever any is bold*, ſays he, *I ſpeak fooliſhly, I am bold alſo. Are they* Hebrews? *So am I. Are they* Iſraelites? *So am I. Are they the Seed of* Abraham? *So am I. Are they Miniſters of Chriſt? I ſpeak as a Fool, I am more: In Labours more abundant, in Stripes above Meaſure: In Priſons more frequent: In Deaths often.—— In Perils of Waters, in Perils of Robbers, in Perils by my own Countrymen, in Perils by the Heathen, in Perils in the City, in Perils in the Wilderneſs, in Perils in the Sea, in Perils among falſe Brethren: In Wearineſs and Painfulneſs, in Watchings often; in Hunger and Thirſt, in Faſtings often; in Cold and Nakedneſs; beſides thoſe Things, that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the Care of all the Churches.* Theſe are the Words of our Apoſtle, ſetting off the faithful Diſcharge of his Miniſtry; and yet no one ever ſuſpected the *Genuineneſs* of this his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* upon that account: As little Reaſon have we therefore, to call in Queſtion the *Authentickneſs* of this Book of *Moſes*, becauſe we find a Paſſage or two that ſpeaks favourably of him.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

THAT all Hiſtorians, both *antient* and *modern*, when they come to ſpeak of the Part, and Concern, they had in ſuch and ſuch Actions, are commonly accuſtom'd to ſpeak in the *third* Perſon; and that the modeſteſt Man upon Earth may ſometimes ſee Occaſion to magnify his Office, or vindicate himſelf, without deſerving the Imputation of Vanity or Arrogance, cannot be deny'd. Now conſidering what Share it was, that *Moſes* himſelf bore in the Facts which he relates, and that the Narrations, Laws, and Admonitions which he recorded, were not deſign'd for that Age only, but directed to all ſucceeding Generations of the World; and withal conſidering, that the ſeditious and turbulent Behaviour of his Brother and Siſter at that Time oblig'd him to juſtify and clear himſelf; there was no imaginable Way more proper for him to expreſs himſelf in, than that which he made Uſe of, even had it been a Matter of his own Study and Contrivance

(e) 2 Cor. xi. 21, &c.

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trivance: But then, if we suppose, that he wrote by divine Inspiration, the Commendation that is given of his natural Lenity and good Nature, must be look'd upon, rather as the *Holy Ghost*'s Testimony concerning *Moses*, than *Moses*'s Testimony concerning himself.

That there was no Juggle in Aaron's *Rod's* blossoming.

Tho' *Moses* was certainly a good-natur'd Man, and therefore cou'd not live long at Variance with his Brother *Aaron*, yet we can hardly suppose, that his Love and Affection for him wou'd ever prevail with him to enter into any fraudulent Measures, in order to raise him to the *Pontificate*. The *Rod*, which gave *Aaron* the Preference, was not (as we noted before) *Moses*'s wonder-working Rod, but, in all Probability, one of the same Tree, from whence the Princes of the other Tribes cut theirs. All these Rods, with the Names of the several Tribes engrav'd upon them, were deliver'd to *Moses* in the Face of the whole Congregation, and by him were instantly carry'd into the Tabernacle: And, that he did not palm upon the People, when his Back was turn'd, and put *an Almond Twig* into the Place of *Aaron*'s Rod, is evident from what is related of it, *viz.* that it had Leaves, Buds, Blossoms, and ripe Fruit upon it, all at one Time, which no Tree of any Kind ever was known to have before.

Some of the Vulgar and less Curious might perhaps, at a cursory View, have been impos'd upon, by a sham Appearance of these Things painted on *Aaron*'s Rod: But *Moses* knew very well that he had the *Heads* of each Tribe to deal with; Men of Sagacity, and Observation, and who were too nearly concern'd in the *Experiment* to let any Pretence to a Miracle go unexamin'd: And therefore we may very well imagine, that when he brought forth all the Rods the next Morning, they survey'd every one very carefully, and made diligent Search into the Alteration, which had pass'd upon that, which belong'd to *Aaron*; and had they found any Deception in it, wou'd have expos'd the two Brothers to Contempt and Ridicule, or rather have depos'd them from all Rule and Power for the Future, as a Couple of vile and impious *Impostors*. But, instead of that, we find that this Miracle silenc'd all Cavils for ever after against *Aaron* and his Family; confirm'd the Authority of *Moses*; and made the People (when he told them, that, by God's Appointment, he had laid up *Aaron*'s Rod to be a Witness against them, that, if they murmur'd any more, they shou'd most certainly be destroy'd) break out into this doleful Complaint; *(f) Behold we die, we perish, we all perish, and shall be consumed with dying:* For they began now to believe God's Threatenings, and to fear, that at one Time or other they shou'd experience some heavy and severe Punishment, as, by this *new Sign*, he had convinc'd them that they justly deserv'd it.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

Thus I have endeavour'd to answer most of the material Objections, which have industriously been rais'd against the *sacred* History of this *Period*; and were it any farther Confirmation of its Truth and Authority, I might add, *(g)* that the whole Matter of *Korah*, how he rebell'd against *Moses*, and made a Defection among the People, for which he suffer'd the very Judgment that the Scripture relates, was doubtless of standing Tradition in the *East*, which the *Mahometans* have borrow'd, and given us at second Hand: That the Consumption of *Aaron*'s Sacrifice *(h) by the Fire which came from the Lord*, rais'd the Report, *(i)* that, in ancient Times, Men did not kindle Fire upon their Altars, but call'd it down from Heaven by Prayer, and that the Flame was produc'd by the Deity, to whom the Sacrifice was offer'd: That the Irradiation of *Moses*'s Face, when he came down from the

(f) Numb. xvii. 12, 13. *(g)* *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Korah*. *(h)* Lev. ix. 24. *(i)* *Servius* in Æneid. Lib. xii. ver. 200, and *Patrick*'s Commentary in Locum. From the Fire of the Altar, which, in the *Mosaick* Language, was call'd *the Fire of the Lord*, as it came down from Heaven, and was perpetually kept burning, 'tis obvious at first Sight, that the *Greeks* deriv'd, in the Way of Etymology, their ἱστία, and the *Roman* their *Vestal* Fire, so famous in all History. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on *Numb.* Annot. 2.

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the Mount, introduc'd the Cuſtom among the Heathens, of adorning the Images of their Gods and Heroes with a beamy Glory about their Heads: That the Veneration paid to his Wonder-working Rod, eſtabliſh'd an Uſage, which prevails almoſt every where, *(k)* for the great Miniſters of State to carry in their Hands Wands, as Enſigns of their Office, whenever they appear at Court; and that the Budding of his Brother *Aaron*'s Rod, in all Probability, gave Riſe to *(l)* the Fable of *Hercules*'s Club, when left in the Ground, ſtriking Root downward, and ſo reviving and repullulating. But I chuſe rather in this Place, to remark the great Affinity between the divine and human Laws, ſo far as they relate to what we call the *Decalogue*, inſomuch that, whatever the antient heathen Law-givers have enacted about theſe Matters, ſeems little more than a Tranſcript from the Ten Commandments, which *Moſes* deliver'd to the *Jews*.

THUS, the *Unity of God*, and the *Folly of making any* Image of him (which conſtitute the two firſt Commandments) was an *(m)* Inſtitution of *Numa*, which he took from *Pythagoras*, who maintain'd that there was only one ſupreme Being, and that, as he is perfectly ſpiritual, and the Object of the Mind only, no viſible Repreſentation can be made of him. *The Reverence of God's holy Name* (which is the Subject of the third) was recogniz'd by the Heathens in all their ſolemn Contracts, Promiſes, and Aſſeverations; and for this Reaſon, *Plato* (in his Book *de Legibus)* acquaints us, that *it is (n) an excellent Leſſon, to be very cautious and tender, in ſo much as mentioning the very Name of God.* The *ſetting apart one Day in ſeven*, and the Obſervation of it for religious Purpoſes, was a Practice ſo general in the Pagan World, that, according to *Philo*, this *ſeventh* Day was truly call'd Ἑορτὴ πάνδημος, or *the univerſal Feſtival*, and by the *Athenians*, according to the Laws then in force, was obſerv'd with the utmoſt Strictneſs, and ſuch as admitted of no ſervile Work. The *Honour and Reſpect due to Parents* was ſecur'd by that excellent Law made by *Solon*, which declares, *(o) that, if any one ſtrike his Parents, or does not maintain them, and provide them a Dwelling, and all Things neceſſary, let him be utterly diſregarded*, and baniſh'd from all civil Society. The *Prohibition of Murder* is confirm'd by the Laws of *Athens*, which make its Puniſhment *capital*, when wilfully committed; Baniſhment, when by Chance-medley, and for every Maim, deſignedly given, impoſes both a *Confiſcation* of Goods, and a *Proſcription* from the City, where the injur'd Perſon dwells. The *Prohibition of Adultery* was ſufficiently enforc'd by *Solon*, when he left the guilty Perſons, when deprehended in the Fact, to the Mercy of the injur'd Huſband, who, if he ſuffer'd them to eſcape with their Lives, had Licence to handle the Man very roughly, *(p)* and to divorce the Woman, who, for her Crime, was excluded all Places of publick Concourſe, and reduc'd below the Condition of a Slave. The *Prohibition of Theft* was ſupported by a Law of *Draco*'s, which made Felons of what Denomination ſoever loſe their Lives for their Crime; but this being thought too ſevere, *Solon*'s Inſtitution was, that every petty Larceny ſhou'd be puniſh'd with double Reſtitution, and ſometimes Impriſonment, but every greater Robbery, to the Value of fifty *Drachms*, with Death. The *Prohibition of falſe Witneſs* was *(q)* ratify'd by the *Athenian* Laws, which not only puniſh'd the Offenders with Fines, Confiſcation of Goods, and Baniſhment, but degraded them likewiſe from all Dignity, as Perſons extremely ignominious, and who (according *(r)* to the Law of the *twelve Tables)* deſerv'd to be thrown from the *Tarpeian* Rock. The *Prohibition of Covetouſneſs of* all Kinds, (which is the Tenth and laſt Commandment)

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

(k) Huet Quæſt. Alnet. *(l)* Huet. ibid. *(m)* Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. v. and *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on *Exod.* xx. 4. *(n)* De Leg. Lib. ii. *(o) Bibliotheca Bibl.* on Deut. Differt. 3. *(p)* Archbiſhop *Potter*'s *Greek* Antiquities. *(q) Bibliotheca Bibl.* ibid. *(r)* A. Gell. Lib. xii. chap. 1.

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ment) no where occurs in the Edicts of any ancient Legislator; for (as *(s)* a pious Bishop well observes) *all the Laws, that were ever made by any Governors upon Earth, respected only the Words and Actions, or the outward Carriage and Behaviour of their Subjects. None ever offer'd to give Laws to the Minds, or Hearts of Men, what they shou'd think, or love, or desire, or the like; and it wou'd have been ridiculous and absurd to have done it, because they cou'd never have known, whether such Laws were observ'd or no*; so proper is the Question, which their great Law-giver puts to the *Jews, (t) what Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all this Law, which I set before you this Day?* So just the Commendation, which the Royal *Psalmist* gives of it: *The Law of the Lord is an undefiled Law, converting the Soul: The Testimony of the Lord is sure, and giveth Wisdom unto the Simple —— Moreover by them is thy Servant taught, and in keeping of them there is great Reward.* From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

DISSERTATION II.

Of the Jewish Tabernacle, &c.

FROM the very first Beginning of Time, God had always some Place appropriated to the solemn Duties of religious Worship. *(u)* Even during the small Space of his Continuance in *Paradise*, *Adam* had *(x)* where to *present* himself before the Lord; and after his Expulsion from thence, *his Sons*, in like Manner, had *(y)* whither to *bring* their Oblations and Sacrifices. The *Patriarchs*, both before and after the Flood, us'd *(z)* Altars, and *(a)* Mountains, and *(b)* Groves, for the self-same Purpose. Here they had their *Proseuchæ*, or Places for Prayer, which were certain Plats of Ground, encompass'd with a Wall, or some other Enclosure, and open'd above. But since the first Place of this Kind, that made any considerable Figure, was the *Tabernacle*, which God order'd *Moses* to erect in the Wilderness, as an Habitation for his Majestick Presence to reside in, it may not be improper, in this Place, to give some Account of it, and the other holy Things appertaining to it.

A Description of the Tabernacle.

The *Tabernacle* was a Tent, cover'd with Curtains and Skins, but much larger than other Tents: It was in the Form of an oblong Square, thirty Cubits in Length, and ten in Height and Breadth, and was properly divided into *two Parts*, viz. the *Holy Place* and *the Holy of Holies*. The *Holy Place* was twenty Cubits long, and ten wide, where stood the Table of Shew-Bread, the Golden Candlestick, and the Altar of Incense. The *Holy of Holies* (which was likewise call'd the *Sanctuary*) was ten Cubits long, and ten broad, contain'd the *Ark of the Covenant*, and was separated from the *Holy Place* by a *Veil*, or Hanging made of rich embroider'd Linnen, which hung upon four Pillars of *Shittim* or *Cedar* Wood, that were cover'd with Plates of Gold, but had their Bases made of Brass; and at the Entrance of the Tabernacle, instead of a Door, there was a Veil of the same Work, sustain'd by the like Pillars, which separated it from the outward Court.

The Boards, or Planks, whereof the Body of the Tabernacle was compos'd, were in all forty-eight, each a Cubit and an half wide, and ten Cubits high. Twenty of them went to make up one Side

(s) Bishop *Beveridge*, upon the Catechism. *(t)* Deut. iv. 8. and Psal. xix. 7, &c. *(u)* Numb. xvii. 12, 13. *(x)* *Hooker*'s Eccles. Polity, Lib. v. *(y)* Gen. iii. 8. *(z)* Ibid. iv. 3. *(a)* Ibid. xiii. 4. *(b)* Ibid. xxii. 1. *(c)* Ibid. xxi. 33.

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Side of the Tabernacle, and twenty the other, and at the *Weſt End* of it were the other eight, which were all let into one another by two *Tenons* above and below, and compacted together by Bars running from one End to the other; but the *Eaſt End* of it was open, and only cover'd with a rich Curtain.

THE *Roof* of the Tabernacle was a ſquare Frame of Planks, reſting upon their Baſes; and, over theſe, were Coverings, or Curtains of different Kinds. Of theſe the *firſt*, on the Inſide, was made of fine Linnen, curiouſly embroider'd in various Colours of Crimſon, and Scarlet, and purple, and Hyacinth: The *next* was made of Goats Hair neatly wove together; and the *laſt* of Sheep and Badgers Skins, (ſome dy'd Red, and others of azure Blue) which were to preſerve the rich Curtains from wet, and to protect the Tabernacle itſelf from the Injuries of the Weather.

The Court. ROUND about the Tabernacle was a large oblong *Court*, an hundred Cubits long, and fifty broad, encompaſs'd with Pillars overlaid with Silver, and whoſe Capitals were of the ſame Metal, but their Baſes were of Braſs. Ten of theſe Pillars ſtood towards the *Weſt*, ſix to the *Eaſt*, twenty to the *North*, and twenty to the *South*, at five Cubits Diſtance from each other: and over theſe hung Curtains made of twined Linnen-thread, in the Manner of Net-work, which ſurrounded the Tabernacle on all Sides, except at the *Entrance* of the Court, which was twenty Cubits wide, and ſuſtain'd with four *Columns*, over-laid with Plates of Silver. Theſe Columns had their *Capitals*, and *Baſes* of Braſs; were plac'd at proportionable Diſtances, and cover'd with a Curtain made of richer Materials.

The Altar of Burnt-Offerings. IN this Court, and oppoſite to the Entrance of the Tabernacle, ſtood the *Altar of Burnt-Offerings* in the open Air, that the Fire, which was kept perpetually upon it, and the Smoke ariſing from the Victims, that were burnt there, might not ſpoil the Inſide of the Tabernacle. It was five Cubits long, as much in Width, and three Cubits high; was plac'd upon a Baſis of Stone Work, and cover'd, both within and without, with Braſs Plates. At the four Corners of this Altar there was ſomething like four Horns, cover'd with the ſame Metal, and as the Altar itſelf was hollow, and open both at Top and Bottom, from theſe Horns there hung a Grate made of Braſs, (faſten'd with four Rings and four Chains) whereon the Wood and the Sacrifice were burnt; and as the Aſhes fell through, they were receiv'd below in a Pan. At a very ſmall Diſtance from this Altar there ſtood, on the *South Side*, a brazen Veſſel, which on Account of its extraordinary Size, was call'd the *Brazen Sea*, in which the Prieſts were us'd to waſh their Feet, whenever they were to offer Sacrifice, or to go into the Tabernacle.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

The Table of Shew-Bread. IN that Part of the Tabernacle, which was call'd the *Holy Place*, there was, on the *North Side*, a *Table* made of *Shittim* or *Cedar* Wood, cover'd with Gold, two Cubits long, one in Breadth, and one and an half in Length. About the Edge of it was an Ornament, or Border made of Gold together with a Crown of Gold, in the Middle, and, at each End was plac'd the Offering of the *Shew-Bread*, viz. ſix Loaves in a Pile to repreſent the twelve Tribes. The Bread was chang'd every Day, and not allow'd to be eaten by any but the Prieſts.

The Golden Candleſtick. OVER againſt this Table, on the *South Side*, ſtood the Candleſtick which was made of pure Gold, upon a Baſis of the ſame Metal, and had ſeven Branches on each Side, and one in the Middle. Theſe Branches were, at equal Diſtances, adorn'd with ſix Flowers like Lillies, with as many Knobs like Apples, and little Bowls like half Almond-Shells, plac'd alternately; and upon each of theſe Branches there was a golden Lamp, which was lighted every Evening, and extinguiſh'd every Morning.

And the Altar of Incenſe. BETWIXT the Table and the Candleſtick, was plac'd the *Altar of Incenſe*, which was but one Cubit in Length and

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Breadth, and two Cubits high; but was cover'd with Plates of Gold, and had a Crown of Gold over it. Every Morning and Evening, the Prieſt in Waiting for that Week offer'd Incenſe of a particular Compoſition upon this Altar, and to this End carry'd a ſmoaking Cenſer, fill'd with Fire, which he took from the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, into the Tabernacle, and ſo placing it upon this other Altar, retir'd.

The High-Prieſt, and his Veſtments.

The Perſons appointed to officiate, about holy Things were of three Kinds, the High-Prieſt, Prieſts, and Levites: And what is very remarkable in the firſt of this Order, is, the Singularity of his *Veſtments*, which were the Breaſt-plate, the Ephod, the Robe, the Cloſe-coat, the Mitre, and the Girdle. The *Ephod*, the *Robe*, and the *Cloſe-coat* were all of Linnen, and cover'd the whole Body from the Neck to the Heel. Over theſe was a purple or blue *Tunick*, which reach'd not ſo low, but was curiouſly wrought all over, and, at the Bottom of it, had Pomegranates, and Bells intermix'd at equal Diſtances. The Pomegranates were made of blue, purple, and crimſon Wool, and * the Bells of Gold.

The Ephod.

The *Ephod* was a Kind of Girdle, made of Gold Thread, and other Threads of divers Colours, which, being brought from behind the Neck, and over the two Shoulders, was put croſs upon the Stomach; then carry'd round the Waiſt, and brought back again about the Body, did gird the *Tunick* like a *Saſh*, and ſo fell down before, and hung as low as the Feet. Upon that Part of the *Ephod*, which came upon the High-Prieſt's Shoulders, were two large precious Stones, whereon were engraven the Names of the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*, on each Stone ſix; and where the *Ephod* croſs'd the High-Prieſt's Breaſt, there was a ſquare Ornament, call'd the *Pectoral*, or *Rational*, wherein were twelve precious Stones ſet with the Names of the twelve Tribes engraven on them, on each Stone one. The *Mitre* was of fine Flax: It cover'd the Head; and on the Forehead was a plate of Gold, whereon were engrav'd theſe Words, Holiness to the Lord, which was ty'd, behind the Head, with two Ribbons faſten'd to its two Ends.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xvii.

The Pectoral.

The Mitre.

The Habits of other Officers.

These were the chief of the ſolemn Ornaments, which belong'd to the High-Prieſt. The other Prieſts had only a ſimple *Tunick*, a Linnen *Mitre*, and a *Girdle*; but they all of them wore Linnen or Cotten *Breeches*, which cover'd their Legs and Thighs, and reach'd up to their Waiſt. The *Levites* had no peculiar Habit in the Ceremonies of Religion; but about the ſixty-ſecond Year of *Chriſt*, they obtain'd of King *Agrippa* Leave to were a Linnen *Tunick*, as well as the Prieſts.

The Office of the Prieſts.

The *High-Prieſt* was at the Head of all Religious Affairs, and the ordinary Judge of all the Difficulties, which related to them. He only had the Privilege of entering into the *Sanctuary* once a Year, which was on the Day of ſolemn *Expiation*, to

* What the Number of the Bells, worn by the High-Prieſt, was, the Scripture is ſilent, and Authors are not ſo well agreed, but the ſacred Hiſtorian has let us into the Uſe and Intent of them in theſe Words; *And it ſhall be upon* Aaron *to miniſter: And his Sound ſhall be heard when he goeth into the* Holy Place *before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not.* The Kings of *Perſia* are ſaid to have the Hem of their Robes adorn'd, like the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt, with Pomegranates, and gold Bells. The Ladies, who were about his Perſon, and whoſe Buſineſs it is to pleaſe and divert him, have little gold Bells faſten'd to their Legs, their Neck, and Elbows, and when they dance, the Sound of theſe make a very agreeable Harmony. The *Arabian* Princeſſes wear large Hollow gold Rings, which are fill'd with little Flints, and make a Sound, like little Bells, when they walk; and beſides theſe, they have abundance of little flat Bobs faſten'd to the Ends of their Hair, which make a Noiſe, as often as they ſtir, and give Notice that the Miſtreſs of the Houſe is going by, that ſo the Servants of the Family may behave themſelves reſpectfully, and Strangers retire, to avoid ſeeing the Perſon that is Paſſing. It was therefore, in all Probability, with a Deſign of giving Notice, that the High-Prieſt was paſſing by, that he too wore little Bells on the Hem of his Robe; or rather it was (as it were) a Kind of publick Notice, that he was going into the Sanctuary; for, as in the King of *Perſia*'s Court, no one was ſuffer'd to enter the Apartments, without giving Notice thereof by the Sound of ſomething; ſo the High-Prieſt, out of Reſpect to the divine Preſence, reſiding in the *Holy of Holies*, did by the Sound of little Bells, faſten'd to the Bottom of his Robe, deſire, as it were, Permiſſion to enter, *that the Sound of the Bells might be heard, and he not puniſh'd with Death* for an unmannerly Intruſion. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Bell*.

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to make Atonement for the Sins of the whole People. The *ordinary* Prieſts attended the Service of the Tabernacle: They kept up a pepetual *Fire* upon the Altar of *Burnt-Offerings*; lighted and extinguiſh'd the *Lamps* of the *golden Candleſtick*; made the Loaves of Shew-Bread; offer'd them on the *golden Altar* in the Sanctuary; chang'd them every *Sabbath-day*; and every Day, at Night and Morning, carry'd in a ſmoaking Cenſer of Incenſe, and plac'd it upon the golden Table, which upon this Account was likewiſe call'd the *Altar of Incenſe*.

The ſeveral Sorts of Sacrifices.

BUT the chief Buſineſs of the Prieſts was to offer Sacrifices, of which there were four Kinds. 1. The *Burnt-Offering*, which was totally conſum'd by Fire upon the Altar, after that the Feet and Entrails had been waſh'd. 2. The *Peace-Offering*, whereof the inward Fat, or Tallow, made up with the Liver and Kidnies, was only burnt upon the Altar: The Breaſt and right Shoulder was the *Perquiſite* of the Prieſts, who were oblig'd to eat them in the *Holy Place*; and the Remainder belong'd to the Perſon, who offer'd the Sacrifice. 3. The *Sacrifice for Sin*, committed either *wilfully* or *ignorantly*: And in this the Prieſt took ſome of the Blood of the Victim, dipp'd his Finger in it, and ſprinkled it ſeven Times towards the Vail of the *Sanctuary*. The ſame Parts of the Victim were burnt on the Altar, in *this*, as in the former Sacrifice. The reſt (if the Sacrifice was offer'd for the Sin of the *High-Prieſt*, or for the *People*) was carry'd without the Camp, and there burnt; but, if it was for a *private* Perſon, the Victim was divided (as was ſaid before) between the Prieſt, and the *Offerer*. 4. The *Sacrifice of Oblation* was either fine Flour, or Incenſe, Cakes of fine Flour, and Oil bak'd, or the firſt Fruits of new Corn. Oil, Salt, Wine, and Frankincenſe went always along with every Thing that was offer'd. All the Frankincenſe was caſt into the Fire; but of the other Things the Prieſt only burnt a Part, and the reſt he reſerv'd to himſelf.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

THUS we have taken a curſory View of the *Jewiſh* Tabernacle, and its Utenſils; of the *Jewiſh* Prieſthood, and its Offices; and have nothing more to do, but to enquire a little for what * Ends and Uſes God was pleas'd to inſtitute theſe Things. To this Purpoſe St *Paul* informs us, that the *Jewiſh* Law was an imperfect Diſpenſation from the very firſt, and *(d) added only becauſe of Tranſgreſſions, until the Seed ſhould come, to whom the Promiſe was made:* That, in great Condeſcenſion, it was adapted to the Weakneſs of the *Jewiſh* People, whom he compares to an Heir under a Tutor or Governor; for theſe are his Words: *(e) I ſay then, that an Heir as long as he is a Child, differeth nothing from a Servant, tho' he be Lord of all: Even ſo we, when we were Children, were*

* *Joſephus*, having treated of the Tabernacle, and the ſeveral Things appertaining to it, makes the Uſe and Deſign of them a little too *myſtical* and *allegorical*. "Let but a Man conſider, ſays he, the Structure of the Tabernacle, "the ſacerdotal Veſtments, and the holy Veſſels, that are dedicated to the Service of the Altar, and he muſt of "Neceſſity be convinc'd, that our *Lawgiver* was a pious Man. ——— For what are all theſe but the Image of "the *whole World?* The *Tabernacle*, conſiſting of thirty Cubits, and being divided into *three Parts*, whereof two "are for the Prieſts in general and of free Acceſs, reſembles the *Earth* and the *Sea*; while the *third*, where no "Mortal (except the *High-Prieſt*) is permitted to enter, is an Emblem of *Heaven*, reſerv'd for God alone. The "*twelve Loaves of Shew-Bread*, upon the Table, ſignify the *twelve Months* in the Year. The *Candleſtick*, which is "made up of ſeventy Pieces, refers to the twelve Signs of the *Zodiack*, through which the ſeven *Planets* take their "Courſe; and the ſeven *Lamps*, on the Top of the ſeven Branches, bear an Analogy to the *Planets* themſelves. "The *Curtains*, with the *four Colours* that are wrought in them, repreſent the *four Elements*. ——— By the High-"Prieſt's *Linnen Garment* is deſign'd the whole Body of the *Earth*; and, by the Violet Colour, the Heavens. The "*Pomegranates* anſwer to *Lightning*; and the Noiſe of the *Bells* to *Thunder*. The *four-coloured Ephod* bears a Reſem-"blance to the very Nature of the *Univerſe*, and the interweaving it with *Threads of Gold*, to the *Rays of the Sun*, "which give us *Light*. The *Pectoral*, or *Rational*, in the middle of it, intimates the Poſition of the *Earth* in the "*Centre* of the World; the *Girdle*, about the Prieſt's Body, is the *Sea* about the *Globe* of the Earth; the two *Sar-*"*donyx* Stones, on the Shoulders, repreſent the *Sun* and *Moon*; and, by the *twelve* other *Stones* on the *Breaſt*, may "be underſtood either the *twelve Months*, or the *twelve Signs* in the *Zodiack*." But all this is too light, and fanciful, one wou'd think, for ſo grave an Author, as *Joſephus*, had not this Way of *allegorizing* Things been the prevailing Cuſtom of the Age. *Jewiſh* Antiq. Lib. iii. c. 7.

(d) Gal. iii. 19. *(e)* Ibid. iv. 1, &c.

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were in Bondage, under the Elements of the World; ſo that *(f) the Law was our School-maſter, to bring us unto Chriſt*, and, *(g) having only a Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image of the Things, it could never, with thoſe Sacrifices, which were offered, Year by Year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect*. In order therefore to illuſtrate this Point, *viz.* that the *Jewiſh* Religion was, in a great Meaſure, intended to typify and prefigure the more perfect Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, we ſhall inſtance in ſome of its *Particulars* already enumerated.

Chriſt and his Tranſactions, typified *in the* Tabernacle, *and its Utenſils.*

THUS the *Tabernacle* itſelf was a Type of our Redeemer dwelling in our Nature; for ſo St *John* tells us, that *(h) the Word was made Fleſh*, and ἐσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, *dwelt among us*, as in a Tabernacle. The *Altar of Burnt-Offerings* in the *Court* pointed out the Death and Sacrifice *(i)* of our Lord, by the ſhedding of whoſe Blood our Sins are pardon'd, and we receiv'd into Mercy and Favour. The *Altar of Incenſe* within the *Holy Place* denoted our Lord's powerful Interceſſion for us, in his exalted State of Glory; and the *Ark of the Covenant* in the *Holy of Holies* was an eminent *Emblem* of him, from whoſe Mouth we receiv'd a Law, *founded upon better Promiſes*; by whoſe Interceſſion we have Acceſs to the *Throne of Grace with all Boldneſs*; and whoſe *Satisfaction* to the divine Juſtice is our true *Propitiatory* or *Mercy-Seat*.

WHAT a manifeſt *Type* the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt was of our Lord and Saviour, the Author to the *Hebrews* has declar'd in more Inſtances than one. The *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt was the only Man, who was permitted to enter into the *Holy of Holies*; and *(k) we have ſuch an High-Prieſt*, ſays the Apoſtle, *who is ſet on the Right-Hand of the Throne of the Majeſty in the Heavens, a Miniſter of the Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not Man.* The *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt offer'd a ſolemn Expiatory Sacrifice once a Year; our Lord *(l) appeared once in the End of the World to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himſelf*. After the expiatory Sacrifice, the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt went into the *Holy Place*, there to offer Incenſe on the golden Altar; our Lord, *when he had purged our Sins, (m) ſat down on the Right-Hand of the Majeſty on high*, there *(n)* to *appear in the Preſence of God*, and, by the Incenſe of his Merits, to make continual *Intercеſſion for us*.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28 to Numb. xvii.

And in the ſeveral Sacrifices, which were offered

IN like Manner, whether we conſider the ſeveral *Qualifications* of the Sacrifices under the Law, or the ſeveral *Sorts* of them, we ſhall find them to be *Types*, and Prefigurations of Chriſt. The Conditions of a *Jewiſh* Sacrifice were,——That it ſhou'd be without Blemiſh, publickly preſented before the Congregation, ſubſtituted in the Sinner's Room, and the Iniquities of the Sinner laid upon him. With Relation to theſe *Properties*, our Saviour is ſaid to be *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparated from Sinners*. That he might *ſanctify his People*, he is ſaid to *have (o) ſuffered without the Gate, bearing our Reproach*; and that *(p) he who knew no Sin, became Sin for us, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him*.

AND ſo, if we look to the ſeveral *Sorts* of Sacrifices appointed under the Law, we ſhall ſoon perceive that theſe equally lead us to *Chriſt*. For he was the *Treſpaſs-Offering*, in that *he was made Sin for us*; the *Peace-Offering*, becauſe *(q) he made Peace by the Blood of his Croſs*; the *Meat and Drink-Offering*, for *(r) his Fleſh is Meat indeed, and his Blood is Drink indeed*; the *Scape-Goat*, for he hath carry'd away our Sins, *(s)* never to be more remember'd againſt us; the *Paſchal Lamb*, for *(t) Chriſt our Paſſover, is ſacrificed for us*; the *great Sacrifice of Atonement*, for *(u) Jeſus Chriſt* the *Righteous*, is both our *Advocate*

(f) Gal. iii. 24. *(g)* Heb. x. 1. *(h)* John i. 14. *(i)* Heb. xiii. 10. *(k)* Ibid. viii. 1, 2. *(l)* Ibid. ix. 26. *(m)* Ibid. i. 3. *(n)* Ibid. 9—24. *(o)* Ibid. xiii. 12, 13. *(p)* 2 Cor. v. 21. *(q)* Col. i. 20. *(r)* John vi. 55. *(s)* Ibid. i. 29. *(t)* 1 Cor. v. 7. *(u)* 1 John ii. 1, 2.

A. M. 2514, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1490, &c.

Advocate with the Father, and a Propitiation for our Sins: And, in fine, *(x) his Blood*, who, *thro' the Eternal Spirit offered himſelf to God, without Spot*, is more effectual, than *the Blood of Bulls and Goats, to purge our Conſciences from dead Works, to ſerve the living God.*

The Change *of the* Jewiſh *Religion conſiſtent with God's Attributes.*

THUS it appears, that the chief End of the ſeveral Inſtitutions, relating to the ceremonial Part of the Jewiſh Worſhip, was to prefigure the Perſon, and Tranſactions of our bleſſed Saviour, *(y) when the Fulneſs of Time was come, that God* ſhould *ſend forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law, to redeem thoſe, that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* And therefore, ſince the Ceremonies of the *Jewiſh* Law cou'd never be of any Eſteem in the Sight of God, any otherwiſe, than as they promoted this End, and prepar'd Men's Minds for the Reception of a more perfect Inſtitution of Religion; it is manifeſt, that, when this more perfect Inſtitution was once ſettled, the former, and more imperfect was, of Courſe, to ceaſe; *(z) there being* neceſſarily *a diſannulling of the Commandment going before, for the Weakneſs and Unprofitableneſs thereof.*

AND from hence we may finally, infer, that, tho' the *Eſſence* of Religion be eternally and immutably the ſame, yet the Form and Inſtitution of it may be, and often has been, chang'd. *(a)* The Eſſence of all Religion is *Obedience* to that *moral* and *eternal* Law, which obliges us to imitate the Life of God in Juſtice, Mercy, and Holineſs, *i. e. to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World.* This is the Sum of all *natural* Religion, as appears from the Diſcourſes of thoſe wiſer *Heathens*, who were freeſt from Prejudice, and Superſtition. This was the Sum of the *Jewiſh* Religion, as appears from the frequent and earneſt Proteſtations of God to that People by his Servants the *Prophets:* And this likewiſe is the Sum of the *Chriſtian* Religion, as the Apoſtles every where inculcate. But, though Religion itſelf is thus immutably the ſame, yet the Form and Inſtitution of it may be different.

From Exod. xxxiv. 28. to Numb. xviii.

WHEN Natural Religion, by Reaſon of its Obſcurity, in this corrupt Eſtate of human Nature, prov'd ineffectual to make Men truly religious, God left them no longer to the Guidance of their Reaſon only, but gave them firſt the *Patriarchal*, and afterwards the *Moſaick* Diſpenſation; and when (through the Incumbrance with ſo many *ritual* Obſervances) this latter prov'd ineffectual to the ſame great End, God aboliſh'd this Form of Religion likewiſe, and inſtituted the *Chriſtian.* In all which Proceeding, there is no Reflection at all upon the *immutable* Nature of God. For, as the Divine Nature is, in the trueſt and higheſt Senſe, *unchangeable*; ſo Religion itſelf, in its Nature and Effence, is likewiſe unchangeable: But, as the Capacities, the Prejudices, and the Circumſtances of Men are different, ſo the *Inſtitution*, and outward *Form* of that Religion (which in its *Eſſence* is always the ſame) may, with the good Pleaſure of God, be chang'd; even as a careful Nurſe (to uſe a Scripture Compariſon upon this Occaſion) adapts the *Diet* to the Strength and Conſtitution of the Perſon ſhe attends: *For every one, that uſeth Milk* (as the Elements of the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation were) *is unſkilful in the Word of Righteouſneſs, for he is a Babe; but ſtrong Meat* (or a Religion of greater Perfection, as the *Chriſtian* is) *belongeth to them, that are of full Age; even thoſe, who, by Reaſon of Uſe, have their Senſes exerciſed to diſcern both Good and Evil.*

(x) Heb. ix. 13, 14. (y) Gal. iv. 4, 5. (z) Heb. vii. 18. (a) Dr *Samuel Clarke*'s Serm.

A. M. 2515, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

CHAP. III.

From the Death of KORAH, *to the* ISRAELITES *Entrance into* CANAAN. *In all* 38 *Years.*

The HISTORY.

The Iſraelites *ſojourning in the Wilderneſs.*

AFTER the Eſtabliſhment of the High-Prieſt's Office in *Aaron*, and his Family, the *Iſraelites* mov'd about, from Place to Place, in the Deſarts of *Arabia*, but chiefly about the Mountains of *Idumæa*, until God, * by ſhortening the Period of human Life, had taken away almoſt all that Generation, *(a) of whom he had ſworn in his Wrath* (as the *Pſalmiſt* expreſſes it) *that they ſhould not enter into his Reſt.* And indeed good Reaſon had he to be angry with them, ſince, during the Remainder of their Peregrination, they were guilty of many more Murmurings, and Idolatries, than *Moſes* has thought proper to record, which are nevertheleſs mention'd, with no ſmall Severity, *(b)* by other inſpir'd Writers.

And engaging with the King of Arad.

As the Time however for their Entrance into the *Holy Land* now drew near, from *Ezion Geber* they advanc'd towards *Kadeſh* in the Wilderneſs of *Sin*, deſigning very probably to enter the Country thro' thoſe narrow Paſſages, which, at that Time, were call'd *the Ways of the Spies*; but *(c)* they were repuls'd by the King of *Arad*, who coming out againſt them with a ſtrong Force, ſlew a conſiderable Number, and took from them much Booty. In their ſecond Attempt however they ſucceeded better; for they defeated the King's Army, ſack'd ſome of his Towns, and vowing at another Opportunity († which happen'd in the Time of *(d) Joſhua)* the utter Deſtruction of the whole Nation; they took their Rout for the

* After the many Judgments and Calamities ſent upon *Iſrael*, by Reaſon of their Rebellions againſt God, *Moſes*, perceiving the divine Threatnings to be daily accompliſh'd, by the frequent Deaths of thoſe who came out of *Egypt*, and *whoſe Carcaſſes were to fall in the Wilderneſs*, compos'd the Ninetieth Pſalm, wherein he mentions the Reduction of human Life to the Term of Years, wherein it has ever ſince ſtopp'd, and makes ſeveral wholſome Reflections thereupon: *The Days of our Age are threeſcore Years and ten; and though Men be ſo ſtrong, that they come to fourſcore Years, yet is their Strength then but Labour and Sorrow; ſo ſoon paſſeth it away, and we are gone. O, teach us therefore to number our Days, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wiſdom!* Ver. 10, 12,

(a) Pſal. xcv. 11. *(b)* Vid. Amos v. 26. Ezek. & Pſal paſſim, Acts vii. 43. *(c)* Numb. xxi. 1, 11.

† The *Jews* have a Tradition, founded on an expreſs Text in *Deuteronomy* (Chap. xx. 10, &c.) that the *Iſraelites* were oblig'd to ſend an Herald to offer Peace in their Name, to every City and People, before they attempted to conquer them by the Sword; that, in Caſe they accepted it, they only became *Tributaries* to them; but, if they refus'd their Offer, they were then to be *vowed* to Deſtruction. *Maimonides* has taken great Pains to prove that all thoſe Nations, which were cut off by the *Iſraelites*, ow'd their Deſtruction to their chuſing to try the Fortune of War, rather than accept of Peace upon ſuch Terms. There is one Objection however, that ſeems to ſtand a little in his Way, and that is, ——— the Stratagem, which the *Gibeonites* made uſe of to obtain Peace from *Iſrael*, which wou'd have been *needleſs*, had the *latter* been oblig'd to offer it, before they began any Hoſtilities: But to this the learned *Rabbi* anſwers ——— that the Reaſon of the *Gibeonites* Policy was, that they had, in common with their Neighbours, refus'd the firſt offer of Peace, and were conſequently doom'd to the ſame Fate with them; and that, for the Prevention of this, their Ambaſſadors feign'd themſelves to come from a Country vaſtly diſtant from any of the other ſeven, and by that Means obtain'd the deſir'd Peace. *Maimon.* ap. Cunæum, & *Baſnag.* Rep. Heb. Tom. 1. Lib. 2. c. 20.

(d) Joſh. xii. 14.

A. M. 2515, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

The Death of Miriam, Moſes's *Offence, and* Aaron's *Death.*

the preſent another Way, and ſo arriv'd again at *Kadeſh*.

HERE it was, that *Miriam*, the Siſter of *Moſes* and *Aaron* (* who was older than either of them) in the hundred and thirty-third Year of her Age dy'd, was bury'd with great Pomp, and by the *Iſraelites* lamented for the Space of a whole Month. Here it was, that the People fell again into their old Way of murmuring for Want of Water, which God order'd *Moſes* to ſupply, by ſpeaking *only* to a certain Rock; but, ſome Way or other, he deviating from his Inſtructions, either through Impatience, or Diffidence, offended God to ſuch a Degree, as to deſerve a Denunciation, that neither he, nor his Brother *Aaron* (who ſeems to have been equally in the Offence) ſhou'd be permitted to enter into *Canaan*. Hence likewiſe it was, that *Moſes* ſent an Embaſſy to the King of *Edom*, deſiring a free Paſſage through his Country, and promiſing to commit no Hoſtilities, nor give the leaſt Moleſtation to any of his Subjects. But the haughty *Edomite* was ſo far from granting his Requeſt, that he came out with a ſtrong Army to oppoſe him; which *Moſes*, no doubt, wou'd have reſented as the Thing deſerv'd, had not God (whom he conſulted upon this Occaſion) order'd him, for the preſent, not to engage with the *Edomites:* So that, decamping from *Kadeſh*, he came to Mount *Hor*, not far from the Borders of *Edom*, where God gave *Aaron* Notice of his approaching Death, and, not long after, commanded *Moſes* to take him, and *Eleazar* his Son, (who was to ſucceed him in the Office of the High-Prieſt) to the Top of the Mount, and there to ſtrip *Aaron* of his *ſacerdotal* Robes, and put them upon his Son; which when *Moſes* had done, *Aaron* ‖ died on the Top of Mount *Hor*, being an hundred and twenty three Years old; and when the People underſtood that he was dead, * they bewail'd him *thirty Days*.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

As

* *Miriam* was older than either *Aaron* or *Moſes*. *Moſes* was the youngeſt: And, when he was born, ſhe might probably be about twelve Years of Age, becauſe, when he was expos'd upon the Banks of the River *Nile*, ſhe, we find, had Addreſs enough to offer her Service to *Pharaoh*'s Daughter to go and fetch her a Nurſe, which can hardly be ſuppos'd of one younger. Some of the antient Fathers are of Opinion, that ſhe dy'd a *Virgin*, and was the *Legiſlatrix*, or Governeſs of the *Jewiſh* Women, as *Moſes* was of the Men; but the more probable Opinion is, that ſhe was marry'd to *Hur*, a Man of chief Note in the Tribe of *Judah*, and on ſeveral Occaſions a Perſon of great Confidence with *Moſes*; but it does not appear that ſhe had any Children by him. She was bury'd, as *Joſephus* tells us, with great Solemnity, at the Charge of the *Publick*, and her Sepulchre (as *Euſebius* reports) was extant in his Time at *Kadeſh*, not far diſtant from the City *Petra*, the Metropolis of *Arabia Petræa*. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. 1. c. 7. and *Calmet*'s Dictionary.

‖ The Mount *Hor* was on the Coaſt of the Land of *Edom* towards the *Eaſt*, in ſome Part of that Tract, which was afterwards denoted by the Mount *Seir*. In *Deuteronomy* ii. 12. we are told expreſsly, *that the* Horims *dwelt in* Seir *before-time*, and accordingly we read, *Gen.* xiv. 6. that *Chedorlaomer*, King of *Elam*, with his Confederates, ſmote the *Horites in their Mount* Seir. Now it ſeems very probable, that, as Places, at firſt, were wont to take their Names from their *Inhabitants*, both this Place, and the People might derive their Names from one *Hor*, whom they deſcended from, and who, in the early Ages of the World, inhabited this Country; and that tho' in Proceſs of Time, the Name of Mount *Seir* came to be us'd to denote the ſame Tract, yet the old Name of Mount *Hor* was preſerv'd in that Part of it, where ſtood the Mountain here ſo call'd by *Moſes*, and on which *Aaron* dy'd. There ſeems to be however no ſmall Difficulty in reconciling this Paſſage in *Numbers* xx. 23—28. with what we read in *Deut.* x. 6. That *the Children of* Iſrael *took their Journey from* Beeroth, *of the Children of* Jaakan, *to* Moſera: *There* Aaron *died*, and *there he was buried*. So that *Moſes* ſeems to have forgot himſelf, when, in one Place, he tells us, that his Brother *Aaron* was bury'd on Mount *Hor*, and in another in *Moſera*. To reconcile this, ſome have ſuppos'd, that Mount *Hor* was ſo near to *Moſera*, where the *Iſraelites* had their Encampment when *Aaron* dy'd, that either Place might, with Propriety enough, be called the Place of his Death, and his Interment. It ſeems however, from the Account, which we have of their Encampments in *Numb.* xxxiii. very plain, that Mount *Hor* and *Moſera* were two diſtinct Places; and therefore others have maintain'd, that the ſixth and ſeventh Verſes in the tenth Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, in the *common Hebrew* Text, have been extremely corrupted by the Ignorance of ſome Tranſcribers, becauſe the *Hebrew Samaritan*, or old *Hebrew* Text, makes the Account, in *Deut.* x. 6, 7. exactly agree with the Order of the Encampments, mention'd in *Numb.* xxxiii. 32, 38. and there it is ſaid, that *Aaron* dy'd, and was bury'd in Mount *Hor*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

• The Author of *Eccleſiaſticus*, having given us a long Commendation of *Aaron*, and his Veſtments, comes, at laſt, to tell us, that " God choſe him out of all Men living, to offer Sacrifices to the Lord, Incenſe, and ſweet " Savour,

A. M. 2515. &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

The Brazen Serpent *ſet up.*

As ſoon as the Days of Mourning were over, they remov'd, and encamp'd at *Zalmanah*, which took its Name from the Image of the *Serpent*, which *Moſes* caus'd to be ſet up there. For the *Iſraelites*, being tir'd with the Length of their Journey, the Narrowneſs of their Paſſes, and the Barrenneſs of the Country, began to relapſe into their old Humour of murmuring and repining, which provok'd God to ſend great * Swarms of fiery Serpents among them; but, after the Death of ſeveral, and upon the Humiliation of the reſt, he commanded *Moſes* to caſt a * brazen Serpent, of the ſame Size and Figure with thoſe, that infeſted them, and to fix it upon a Pole, ſituate on ſome eminent Ground, that as many, as were bitten by the *living* Serpents, might look up to the *brazen* one, and be heal'd. Which accordingly was done, and had its intended miraculous Effect. From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

The Iſraelites *overcome* Sihon *and* Og, *and ſeize on their Country.*

Several were the Marches and Encampments, which the *Iſraelites*, without committing the leaſt Hoſtilities, made between the Countries of *Moab* and *Ammon*, till they came, at length, to the Country of the *Amorites*. And from hence *Moſes* || ſent Ambaſſadors to *Sihon* their King, demanding a Paſſage through his Country, and offering to pay for all Manner of Neceſſaries, without giving him the leaſt Diſturbance,

" Savour, for a Memorial, and to make Reconciliation for his People; that he gave unto him the Commandments, " and Authority in the Statutes of Judgments, that he ſhould teach *Jacob* the Teſtimonies, and inform *Iſrael* in the " Laws; that Strangers conſpir'd together againſt him, and maligned him in the Wilderneſs —— this the Lord " ſaw, and it diſpleas'd him, and, in his wrathful Indignation, they were conſum'd: —— But he made *Aaron* more " honourable, and gave him an Heritage, and divided unto him the *firſt Fruits* of the Increaſe; ſo that he did eat " the Sacrifices of the Lord, which he gave unto him and to his Seed, *&c.*" He dy'd in the Arms of *Moſes* his Brother, and *Eleazar* his Son, and Succeſſor in the High-Prieſthood. They bury'd him in ſome Cave belonging to Mount *Hor*, and kept the Place of his Interment from the Knowledge of the *Iſraelites*, perhaps from an Apprehenſion, that, in After-Ages, they might pay ſome ſuperſtitious Worſhip to him; or, rather, that the *Arabians*, among whom they then dwelt, might not, at any Time, take it in their Heads to violate the Sanctity of his Grave, *Eccluſ.* xlv. 13, *&c.*

* Some Authors are of Opinion, that theſe Serpents were only little Worms, which bred in the Skin, and were of ſo venomous a Nature, that they immediately poiſon'd thoſe, who were infected among them. But it is very evident, that not only the original Words, *Necaſhim Seraphim*, ſignify a *burning* or *winged* Serpent, but that theſe Creatures are very common both in *Egypt* and *Arabia*, inſomuch that there wou'd be no living in thoſe Countries, if theſe Serpents had not by Providence been debarr'd from *multiplying*, as other Serpents do. For the *Arabians* tell us, that, after they have coupled together, the *Female* never fails to kill the *Male*, and that her *young Ones* kill her, as ſoon as they are hatch'd. *Herodotus*, who had ſeen ſeveral of theſe Serpents, tells us, that they very much reſemble thoſe, which the *Greeks* and *Latins* call *Hydræ*; and *Bochart* has quoted a great Number both of antient and modern Authors to prove, that they really are the *Hydræ*. They are but ſhort, are ſpotted with divers Colours, and have Wings like thoſe of a *Bat*. The *Ibis* is their mortal Enemy: And *Herodotus* tells us, that, at *Butos* in *Egypt*, he had ſeen a vaſt Quantity of their *Skeletons*, whoſe Fleſh theſe Birds had devour'd. They love ſweet Smells, frequent ſuch Trees as bear Spices, and the Marſhes, where the *aromatick* Reed (or *Caſſia*) grows; and therefore, when the *Arabians* go to gather the *Caſſia*, they clothe themſelves with Skins, and cover all their Heads over, except their Eyes, becauſe their Biting is very dangerous. *Bochart*, de Animal. ſacr. Part. II. Lib. 3. c. 13.

* This *brazen Serpent* continu'd among the *Jews* above ſeven hundred Years, even to the Time of *Hezekiah*, King of *Judah*; but, when it came to be made an Object of *Idolatry*, and the People, for ſome Time, had paid their Incenſe and Adoration to it, that pious Prince caus'd it to be broken in Pieces; and, by way of Contempt, call'd it *Nehuſhtan*, that is to ſay, *a brazen Bawble or Trifle*. At *Milan* however, in the Church of St *Ambroſe*, they pretend to ſhew you a Serpent made of Braſs, which they tell you is the ſame with that of *Moſes*. But every one may believe of this as he pleaſes. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Serpent*.

|| It may here be propos'd as a Difficulty, how *Moſes* came to offer the *Amorites* Terms of Peace, conſidering that the *Iſraelites* were commanded to deſtroy them, and to take Poſſeſſion of their Country. But to this it has been anſwer'd by ſome learned Men, that, notwithſtanding God had expreſsly doom'd this People to an Extermination, yet *Moſes* thought himſelf at Liberty to indulge his uſual Meekneſs, and to begin with gentle and amicable Meaſures, though he might at the ſame Time be perſuaded, that they wou'd avail nothing; and this probably at the Suggeſtion of God himſelf, to cut off all Occaſions or Pretence of Complaint from the *Amorites*, as if they had not been honourably and fairly dealt with, and that the Equity and Righteouſneſs of God's Proceeding with a *Prince* of ſo ſavage and obſtinate a Temper might appear in a ſtronger Light, when the Conſequence of his refuſing a free Paſſage to the *Iſraelites*, and bringing his Army into the Field againſt them, ſhou'd happen to be his own Defeat and Deſtruction. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on *Numb.* xxi. 21.

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Diſturbance. But † the *Amorite* Prince, not thinking it ſafe to receive ſo numerous a People into the Heart of his Kingdom, not only deny'd them a Paſſage, but accounting it better Policy to attack, than to be attack'd, gather'd what Forces he could together, and march'd out to give them Battle. But not far from *Jahaz*, where the Engagement was, the *Iſraelites* overthrew him; and, having made themſelves Maſters of his Country, put all, both Man, Woman, and Child, to the Sword; And not long after this, *Og* †, King of *Baſhan*, † a Man of a prodigious gigantick Size, attempting to obſtruct their Paſſage, underwent the ſame Fate. For they ſeiz'd his Country, and utterly deſtroy'd the Inhabitants thereof, reſerving only the Cattle, and Spoil of the Cities, as a Prey to themſelves, as they had done before in the Caſe of *Sihon*.

Upon their entering the Borders of Moab, Balak *ſends for* Balaam.

ENCOURAG'D by theſe Succeſſes, the *Iſraelites* march'd to the Plains of *Moab*, and encamp'd on the Banks of the River *Jordan*, oppoſite to *Jericho*. This put *Balak* (who was then King of *Moab*) into a terrible Conſternation: For, ſuppoſing himſelf not able to engage the mighty Force of *Iſrael*, he had not only made a ſtrong Alliance with the *Midianites* and *Ammonites*, his Neighbours, in order to ſtop their Progreſs, but thought it adviſeable likewiſe, before he began any Hoſtilities againſt them, to try how far the Power of *Balaam*'s Enchantments (a noted Magician in *Pethor*, a City of *Meſopotamia*) might go, in turning the Fortune of the War towards his Side.

From Numb. xviii to the End of Deuteronomy.

To this Purpoſe he diſpatch'd a ſelect Number of his *Nobles*, with coſtly Preſents to ‖ *Balaam*, intreating him in the King's Name to come, and curſe him a People, who were arriv'd upon the Borders of his Territories; but God, for that Time, would

† *Grotius* (in his ſecond Book *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 2. Sect. 13.) is of Opinion, that, according to the *Law of Nations*, the Highways, Seas, and Rivers of every Country ought to be free to all Paſſengers, upon juſt Occaſions. He produces ſeveral Examples from *Heathen* Hiſtory of ſuch Permiſſion being granted to Armies, and thence he infers, that *Sihon* and *Og*, denying the *Iſraelites* this Privilege, gave a juſt Ground of War; nor does he think, that the Fear, which theſe Princes might conceive, is any Excuſe at all for not granting the Thing, becauſe *no Man's Fear can take away another Man's Right*, eſpecially, when ſeveral Ways might have been found out to have made their Paſſage ſafe on both Sides. But, when all is ſaid, it ſeems not clear, that all Men have ſuch a *Right* as this great Man thinks they may claim. No Man, we know, can challenge a Paſſage through a *private* Man's Ground without his Leave; and every Prince has the ſame Dominion in all his Territories, that a private Man has in his Land. As for the Examples therefore of thoſe, who had permitted Armies to paſs through their Kingdoms, they are Examples of *Fact*, rather than of *Right*, and of ſuch as were not in a Condition to refuſe what was demanded of them. For the Thing is notorious, that ſeveral Countries have ſuffer'd very grievouſly by granting this Liberty; and therefore no Prince, who conſults his Subjects Safety, is to be blam'd for not granting it; nor was the War with the *Amorites* founded upon this Reaſon, as we ſhall ſee hereafter. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The Land of *Baſhan* was one of the moſt fertile Cantons of *Canaan*, which reach'd on the *Eaſt* to the River *Jordan*, on the *Weſt* to the Mountains of *Gilead*, on the *South* to the Brook *Jabbock*, and on the *North* to the Land of *Geſhur*. The whole Kingdom took its Name from the Hill of *Baſhan*, which is ſituate in it, and has ſince been call'd *Batanæa*. It had no leſs than ſixty wall'd Towns in it, beſides Villages. It afforded an excellent Breed of Cattle, and ſtately Oaks, and was, in ſhort, a plentiful and populous Country. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 7.

† The Deſcription of this *gigantick* King, who was the laſt of the Race of the *Rephaims*, or vaſt prodigious Men, we have in *Deuteronomy* iii. 11. and from the Size of his Bed (which was preſerv'd a long Time in the City of *Rabbal*, the Capital of the *Ammonites*) we may gueſs at his Stature. It was nine Cubits long, and four Cubits broad, *i. e.* fifteen Feet four Inches and a half long, and ſix Feet ten Inches broad. But the *Jewiſh* Doctors, not content with ſuch *Pigmy* Wonders, have improv'd the Story to their own liking. For they tell us, that this Bed of nine Cubits could be no more than his Cradle, ſince himſelf was ſix Score Cubits high, when full grown; that he liv'd before the Flood, and that the Waters of it, when at the higheſt, reach'd only up to his Knees; that however he thought proper to get upon the Top of the Roof of the Ark, where *Noah* ſupply'd him with Proviſion, not out of any Compaſſion to him, but that the Men, who came after the *Deluge*, might ſee, how great the Power of God was, who had deſtroy'd ſuch *Monſters* from the Face of the Earth. *Calmet* and *Munſter* in *Deut.* Chap. iii.

‖ In 2 *Pet.* chap. ii. ver. 15. *Balaam* is ſaid to be *the Son of* BOSOR, according to our Verſion; but as the Words, *the Son*, are not found in the Original, but were inſerted by the Tranſlators, to ſupply the Senſe, as they imagin'd;

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would not permit him to go: Whereupon *Balak*, ſuppoſing either that the Number and Quality of his Meſſengers did not anſwer *Balaam*'s Ambition, or the Value of the Preſents his Covetouſneſs, ſent Meſſengers, of a more honourable Rank with larger Propoſals, and Promiſes of high Promotion, if he would but gratify him in this one Thing.

Balaam's *Journey, and Behaviour when he arriv'd.*

(e) BALAAM loved the Wages of Unrighteouſneſs; and therefore blinded with this Paſſion, he addreſs'd God for Leave to go; which God in his Anger granted, but under ſuch Reſtrictions, as would neceſſarily hinder all his *Faſcinations* from doing the *Iſraelites* any Harm.

With this Permiſſion he ſet forward with the Princes of *Moab*; but as he was on the Road, an Angel met him, whom (tho' he perceiv'd him not) his Aſs plainly ſaw, and therefore turn'd aſide into the Field to avoid him. With much ado, *Balaam* beat his Aſs into the Road again; but when the Angel ſtood in a narrow Paſſage between two Walls, which inclos'd a Vineyard, the Aſs for Fear ran againſt one of the Walls, and cruſh'd *Balaam*'s Leg, which provok'd him ſo, that he beat him again. At laſt, the Angel remov'd, and ſtood in a Place ſo very narrow, that there was no Poſſibility of getting by him, whereupon the Aſs fell down under his Rider, and would go no farther. This enrag'd the Prophet ſtill more; and, as he was beating and belabouring the poor Creature moſt unmercifully, God was pleas'd to give the Aſs the Faculty of *Speech*, wherein he expoſtulated the hard Uſage he had met with; and, as *Balaam* was going to juſtify himſelf, he was likewiſe pleas'd to open the Prophet's Eyes, and let him ſee the Angel ſtanding in the Way with a naked Sword in his Hand, which ſo terrify'd him, that he fell down upon his Face, aſk'd Pardon for his Treſpaſs, and offer'd to return home again, if ſo be his Journey was diſpleaſing to God.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

That his Journey was diſpleaſing to God himſelf, he could not be ignorant, becauſe, in his firſt Addreſs, God had expreſſly interdicted his going. Being reſolv'd however, out of the Man's wicked Inclination, to raiſe ſome Kind of Advantage, and to make him, who was hir'd to curſe, the Inſtrument of pronouncing a Bleſſing upon his People, God gave him now free Leave to proceed. When *Balak* underſtood that *Balaam* was on the Road, himſelf went to receive him upon the Confines of his Dominions; and having, in a friendly Manner, blam'd him for not coming at his firſt ſending, which *Balaam* excus'd upon Account of the *Reſtraint*, which God had laid on him, he conducted him to his *capital* City, and there entertain'd him *publickly*, with his Princes and Nobles that Day; and the next Morning, carry'd him to the high Places conſecrated to * *Baal*, that from thence he might take a View of the Extremity of the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp. Whilſt they were here, the Prophet order'd † ſeven Altars to be erected,

imagin'd; the Word *Boſor* may denote a *Place*, as well as a *Perſon*, and accordingly, *Grotius* underſtands St. *Peter*'s Words, not as if *Boſor* was the *Father*, but the City of *Balaam*: For what was anciently call'd *Pethor*, the *Syrians*, in After-Ages, call'd *Boſor*, by an eaſy Change of two Letters, which is a Thing not unuſual. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 7.

(e) 2 Pet. ii. 15.

* The Word *Baal* ſignifies *Lord*, and was the Name of ſeveral *Gods*, both *Male* and *Female*, as *Selden (de Diis Syris*, c. 1.) ſhews. The God of the *Moabites* was *Chemoſh*, but here very probably is call'd by the common Name of *Baal*: And, as all Nations worſhipp'd their Gods upon high Places, ſo this God of *Moab*, having more Places of Worſhip than one, *Balak* carry'd *Balaam* to them all, that from thence he might take the moſt advantageous Proſpect of the *Iſraelites*. Theſe high Places were full of Trees, and ſhady Groves, which made them commodious both for the ſolemn Thoughts, and Prayers of ſuch as were *devout*, and for the filthy Inclinations and abominable Practices of ſuch as affected to be *wicked*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† According to the Account, which both *Feſtus* and *Servius* give us of ancient Times, the Heathens ſacrific'd to the *Celeſtial* Gods only upon *Altars*: To the *Terreſtrial*, they ſacrific'd upon the *Earth*; and to the *Infernal*, in Holes digg'd in the Earth. And tho' the Number *ſeven* was much obſerv'd among the *Hebrews*, even by God's own Appointment, *Levit.* iv. 6. yet we do not read of more than one Altar built by the *Patriarchs*, when they offer'd

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erected, and ſeven Oxen, and ſeven Rams to be got ready; and having * offer'd an Ox and a Ram on each Altar, he left *Balak* to ſtand by the Sacrifices, while himſelf withdrew to conſult the Lord; and, upon his Return, acquainted the King, "How impoſſible it was for him "to do the Thing, that he might expect "from him, *viz.* the curſing a People "who were ſo ſignally under the Protec-"tion of Heaven; and ſo magnifying "their Proſperity and Increaſe, he con-"cludes with a Wiſh, that his Fate might "be theirs, both in Life and Death."

BALAK, at theſe Words, expreſs'd no ſmall Surprize; but ſtill not diſcourag'd he hop'd that the Change of the Place might poſſibly produce ſome better Luck: And therefore taking *Balaam* to the Top of Mount *Piſgah*, he try'd whether he might not be permitted to curſe them from thence. But all in vain. The ſame Number of Altars were erected, the Bullocks and Rams were offer'd, and the Prophet withdrew to conſult God, as before; but ſtill he return'd with no better News: For the Purport of his Declaration was, "That "God was fix'd and immutable in his "Favour to the *Iſraelites*; that he would "not ſuffer any bloody Deſigns, or any "Frauds, or Inchantments to prevail "againſt them, but would finally make "them victorious, wherever they came." From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

THIS was ſo great a Mortification to *Balak*, that, to ſilence *Balaam*, he forbad him either to curſe or bleſs; but he ſoon chang'd his Mind, and deſir'd him to make a farther Trial at another Place. Accordingly, another Place was made Choice of. Freſh Altars were rais'd, and freſh Sacrifices offer'd, but all to no Purpoſe: *Balaam*, perceiving that God was reſolv'd to continue bleſſing *Iſrael*, without retiring, as aforetimes, under Pretence of conſulting God, at the firſt Caſt of his Eye upon the Tents of the *Iſraelites*, brake out into Ejaculations of Praiſe; and then, in proper and ſignificant *Metaphors*, foretold their Extent, Fertility, and Strength, and that *thoſe that bleſſed them, ſhould be bleſſed, and thoſe that curſed them ſhould be curſed.*

His Prophecies concerning the Iſraelites.

BY this Time *Balak*, enrag'd to hear *Balaam*, whom he had ſent for to curſe the Children of *Iſrael*, thus three Times *ſucceſſively* bleſs them, could no longer contain himſelf, but ſmiting his Hands together, he bad him haſte, and be gone, ſince, by his fooliſh Adherence to God's Suggeſtions, he had both abus'd him, and defrauded himſelf. * *Balaam* had Recourſe to his old Excuſe, of not daring to tranſcend the

their Sacrifices, nor were any more than one allow'd by *Moſes:* And therefore we may well ſuppoſe, that there was ſomething of heathen Superſtition in this Erection of *ſeven* Altars, and that the *Moabites*, in their Worſhip of the Sun, (who is here principally meant by *Baal*) did at the ſame Time ſacrifice to the ſeven Planets. This was originally a Part of the *Egyptian* Theology; for as they worſhipp'd at this Time the Lights of Heaven, ſo they firſt imagin'd the ſeven Days of the Week to be under the reſpective Influence of theſe ſeven Luminaries. *Belus*, and his *Egyptian* Prieſts, having obtain'd leave to ſettle in *Babylon*, about half a Century before this Time, might teach the *Chaldeans* their Aſtronomy, and ſo introduc'd this *Egyptian* Notion of the Influence of the ſeven ruling Stars, which *Balaam*, being no Stranger to the Learning of the Age and Country he liv'd in, might pretend to *Balak* to proceed upon in his Divinations and Auguries. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary in Locum, and *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii.

* In the Text it is ſaid, that *Balak* and *Balaam offered on every Altar a Bullock and a Ram*, Numb. xxiii. 2. But, though it was cuſtomary, in thoſe early Days, for Kings to officiate as Prieſts, yet it is rather to be ſuppos'd, that *Balak* only *preſented* the Sacrifices, and that *Balaam* perform'd the Office of ſacrificing them; but then it may be made a Queſtion, to whom the Sacrifices were offer'd. And to this it may be anſwer'd, that they might Both have a different Intention; that *Balak* might ſupplicate *Baal*, while *Balaam* was making his Addreſſes to the Lord, tho' with ſuch ſuperſtitious Ceremonies, as, it is likely, were us'd by the Worſhippers of *Baal*. Or why may not we ſuppoſe, that *Balaam*, telling *Balak*, that he cou'd effect nothing without the Lord, the God of *Iſrael*, perſuaded him to join with him at that Time in his Worſhip, that they might more powerfully prevail with him to withdraw his Preſence from the *Iſraelites?* For there is no Reaſon to imagine, that *Balaam* wou'd go *to enquire of the Lord*, immediately after he had ſacrific'd to other Gods. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* *Joſephus* brings in *Balaam* making his Apology for himſelf, in order to pacify *Balak*'s Rage, for his having bleſs'd the *Iſraelites*, inſtead of curſing them. "And does King *Balak* think, that, where Prophets are upon the "Subject of *Fatalities*, or Things to come, they are left to their own Liberty, what to ſay, and what not, or to

"make

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the divine Commands; but, being willing to gratify the King, and, in Compliance to his covetous Temper, to gain ſome Reward to himſelf, he offer'd to *advertiſe* him of what the *Iſraelites* would do to his People in ſubſequent Ages; but ſtill, (againſt his own Inclination) he beſtow'd Bleſſings on *Iſrael*, and propheſy'd, "That "a *Star* ſhould come forth from *Jacob*, "and a *Rod* from *Iſrael*; that it ſhould "ſmite the *Chiefs* of *Moab*, and deſtroy "the *Children* of *Seth*; that *Edom* ſhould "fall under its Power; and that the "*Amalekites* and *Kenites* ſhould be extir-"pated: In fine, that the *weſtern* Nations, "the *Greeks* and *Romans*, ſhould vanquiſh "the *Aſſyrians*, deſtroy the *Hebrews*, and "periſh themſelves."

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

at his own Diſappointment in miſſing the Reward he expected, and with a Purpoſe to revenge himſelf on the *Iſraelites*, as the Occaſion of it, he inſtructed the *Moabites* and *Midianites* in a wicked * Device; which was, to ſend their Daughters into the Camp of the *Iſraelites*, in order to draw them firſt into Lewdneſs, and then into Idolatry, the ſure Method to deprive them of the Aſſiſtance of that God, who protected them. This Artifice ſucceeded; (for the very next Account we have of the *Iſraelites*, is, that they lay encamp'd at *Shittim*, where many of them † were deluded by theſe ſtrange Women, not only to commit Whoredom with them, but to aſſiſt at their Sacrifices, and worſhip their Gods, even * *Baal-peor)* and was a Crime ſo deteſtable to God, that he puniſh'd it with a Plague,

The Iſraelites *commit Whoredom and Idolatry with ſtrange Women, and are puniſh'd for it.*

After theſe Predictions, as if vex'd

"make their own Speeches? We are only the paſſive Inſtruments of the *Oracle*. The Words are put in our Mouths; "and we neither think, nor know what we ſay. I remember well, *ſays he*, that I was invited hither, with great "Earneſtneſs, both by yourſelf, and by the *Midianites*; and that it was at your Requeſt I came, and with a Deſire "to do all, that in me lay, for your Service. But what am I able to do againſt the Will and Power of God? I "had not the leaſt Thought of ſpeaking one good Word of the *Iſraelites* Army, or of the Bleſſings, which God hath "in Store for them; but, ſince God has decreed to make them great and happy, I have been forc'd to ſpeak, as "you have heard, inſtead of what I had otherwiſe deſign'd to ſay." *Jewiſh* Antiq. Lib. iv. cap. 6.

* Tho' *Moſes* makes no mention of this Contrivance, where he deſcribes the Interview between *Balaam* and *Balak*; yet, in the xxxiſt Chapter of *Numbers*, Ver. 16. he lays the whole Blame upon *Balaam*; and *Joſephus* accordingly informs us, that, after he had gone as far as the River *Euphrates*, he bethought himſelf of this Project, and, having ſent for *Balak*, and the Princes of *Midian*, he thus addreſs'd himſelf to them. "To the End that King *Balak*, *ſays* "*he*, and you the Princes of *Midian*, may know the great Deſire I have to pleaſe you, tho', in ſome Sort, againſt the "Will of God; I have thought of an *Expedient*, that may perhaps be for your Service. Never flatter yourſelves "that the *Hebrews* are to be deſtroy'd by Wars, Peſtilence, Famine, or any other of theſe common Calamities; for "they are ſo ſecure under God's ſpecial Providence, that they are never totally to be extinguiſh'd by any of theſe "depopulating Judgments: But, if any ſmall, and temporary Advantage againſt them will give you any Satisfaction, "hearken to my Advice. Send into their Camp a Proceſſion of the loveliеſt Virgins you can pick up; and, to im-"prove Nature, dreſs them up with all the Ornaments of Art, and give them their Leſſons, how to behave them-"ſelves upon all Occaſions of *Courtſhip* and *Amour*. If the young Men ſhall make Love, and proceed to any Impor-"tunities, let them threaten immediately to be gone, unleſs they will actually renounce their Country's Laws, and "the Honour of that God, who preſcrib'd them, and finally engage themſelves to worſhip after the Manner of the "*Midianites* and *Moabites*. This, *ſays he*, will provoke God, and draw Vengeance upon their Heads." *Jewiſh* Antiq. ibid.

† The *Jewiſh* Doctors tell us, that, on a great Feſtival, which the *Moabites* made in Honour of their God *Baal-peor*, ſome *Iſraelites*, who happen'd to be there, caſting their Eyes upon their young Women, were ſmitten with their Beauty, and courted their Enjoyment; but, that the Women would not yield to their Motion, upon any other Condition, than, that they would worſhip their Gods. Whereupon, pulling a little Image of *Peor* out of their Boſom, they preſented it to the *Iſraelites* to kiſs, and then deſir'd them to eat of the Sacrifices, which had been offer'd to him. But *Joſephus* tells the Story otherwiſe, *viz.* That the Women, upon ſome Pretence or other, came into the *Iſraelitiſh* Camp, and, when they had enamour'd the young *Hebrews*, according to their Inſtructions, they made a Pretence, as tho' they muſt be gone; but, upon paſſionate Entreaties, accompanied with Vows and Oaths on the other Side, the ſubtle *Enchantreſſes* conſented to ſtay with them, and grant them every Thing that they deſir'd, upon Condition that they would embrace their Religion. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Joſephus*, ibid.

* The *Jewiſh* Doctors are generally of Opinion, that this *Baal peor* was the ſame with *Priapus*, the Idol of *Turpitude*; and that the Worſhip of him conſiſted in ſuch obſcene Practices, or Poſtures at leaſt, as were not fit to be named. Others have aſſerted, that this God was the ſame with *Saturn*, a Deity ador'd in *Arabia*; nor is it unlikely, that the Adventure related of *Saturn*, and his Caſtration by his own Son, may have introduc'd the Obſcenities, that are practis'd in the Worſhip of this *Idol*. But others, with great Aſſurance, maintain, that *Peor* was the ſame with *Adonis*, whoſe Feaſts were celebrated in the Manner of Funerals, but the People, who obſerv'd them, at that Time,

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a Plague, which, in a ſhort Time, carry'd off ‖ about twenty-four Thouſand of the Offenders. This however was not the only Puniſhment, which God exacted: For he commanded *Moſes* ‡ to erect a Court of *Judicature* conſiſting of the Heads of all the Families, and to try and hang all, that had been guilty of this Whoredom and Idolatry, without Reſpect to Friendſhip or Kindred; which was accordingly done, and about one Thouſand more were in this Manner put to Death.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

The Impudence and Puniſhment of Zimri.

BY this Time, the greateſt Part of the People, being come a little to themſelves, were bewailing their Folly and Wickedneſs, at the Door of the Tabernacle; when they were ſurpriz'd with * an Inſtance of the moſt unparallell'd Boldneſs in one of the Chiefs of the Tribe of *Simeon*, nam'd *Zimri*, who, in the Sight of *Moſes*, and the whole Congregation, had brought a young *Midianitiſh* Princeſs, whoſe Name was *Cozbi*, into the Camp, and was leading her into his Tent. Their Impudence however

committed a thouſand diſſolute Actions, particularly when they were told, that *Adonis*, whom they had mourn'd for as dead, was return'd to Life again. However this be, it is very probable, that as *Peor* was the Name of a Mountain in the Country of *Moab*, the Temple of *Baal* ſtood upon it, and thence he was call'd *Baal-Peor*. *Calmet*'s Commentaries and Diſſertations. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Selden* de Diis *Syris*.

‖ St *Paul*, in his Obſervations upon the Judgments, which befel the *Iſraelites* in the Wilderneſs, tells us expreſsly, that the Number of thoſe, who were cut off in this Plague, was no more than *three and twenty Thouſand*, 1 Cor. x. 8. Whereas *Moſes* makes them no leſs than *four and twenty Thouſand*. But this Difference is eaſily reconcil'd, if we do but conſider, that in the *four and twenty Thouſand*, which *Moſes* computes, the Thouſand, who were convicted of *Idolatry*, and thereupon were ſlain with the Sword, *in the Day of the Plague*, (Numb. xxv. 5, 18.) are comprehended; whereas the Apoſtle ſpeaks of none, but thoſe, that died of the Peſtilence. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

‡ According to our *Tranſlation*, the Command, which God gave *Moſes*, runs thus: ——— *Take all the Heads of the People, and hang them up before the Lord, againſt the Sun, that the fierce Anger of the Lord may be turned away from* Iſrael, *Numb.* xxv. 4. But unleſs we can ſuppoſe, that the *Heads* of each Tribe were guilty of this Lewdneſs and Idolatry, the Sentence here denounc'd wou'd have been highly unjuſt: And, what others alledge, that they were guilty of a ſhameful Neglect in not oppoſing the growing Miſchief, and puniſhing the Offenders; this might be very probably out of their Power, ſince even *Moſes* himſelf, very frequently found them too headſtrong for him. It was ſomewhat ſtrange therefore, that our *Tranſlators* ſhou'd take the Paſſage in this Senſe, when the *Samaritan* Copy, the *Jeruſalem Targum*, moſt of the antient *Tranſlations*, and ſeveral later *Commentators* of great Note, have made the Word *Otham*, i. e. *them*, not to refer to the Heads of the *People*, but to ſuch as had *join'd themſelves to* Baal peor: And ſo the Meaning of the Command will be, that the Heads of the People ſhou'd divide themſelves into ſeveral Courts of Judgment, and examine who had committed Idolatry, and, after Conviction, cauſe them to be hang'd, *i. e.* hang'd after they were ſton'd; for among the *Hebrews* none were hang'd alive, but in the Caſes of Idolatry, or Blaſphemy, were firſt *ſton'd*, and then hang'd up *againſt the Sun*, i. e. publickly and openly, that all the People might ſee, and fear to ſin. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* When the *Iſraelites*, at the Inſtigation of the ſtrange Women, they had receiv'd into the Camp, were fallen from Luſt into Idolatry, *Moſes* (according to *Joſephus*) perceiving that the Infection began to ſpread, call'd the People together, and, in a general Diſcourſe, reminded them how unworthy a Thing it was, and how great a Scandal to the Memory of their Anceſtors, for them to value the gratifying their Luſts and Appetites, above the Reverence, they ow'd to their God, and their Religion; how incongruous a Thing, for Men, that had been virtuous and modeſt in the Deſart, to lead ſuch profligate Lives in a good Country, and ſquander away that in Luxury, which they had honeſtly acquir'd in the Time of their Diſtreſs; and thereupon he admoniſh'd them to repent in Time, and to ſhew themſelves brave Men, not in the Violation of the Laws, but in the Maſtery of their unruly Affections. This he ſpoke without naming any one: But *Zimri*, who took himſelf to be pointed at, roſe up, and made the following Speech. " You are at Liberty, *Moſes*, *ſays he*, to uſe your own Laws: They have been a long Time in Exerciſe, " and Cuſtom is all that can be ſaid for their Strength or Credit. Were it not for this, you wou'd, to your Coſt, " have found long ſince, that the *Hebrews* are not to be impos'd upon; and I myſelf am one of the Number, that " never will truckle to your *tyrannical* Oppreſſion. For what's your Buſineſs all this while, but, under a bare Pre- " text, and Talk of Laws, and God, to bar us, not *only* from the Exerciſe, but the very Deſire of *Liberty*? What " are we the better for coming out of *Egypt*, if it be only in Exchange for a more grievous Bondage under *Moſes*? " You are to make here what Laws you pleaſe, and we to abide the Penalties of them, when at the ſame Time, 'tis " you only, that deſerve to be puniſh'd for aboliſhing ſuch Cuſtoms, as are authoriz'd by the common Conſent of " Nations, and ſetting up your own Will and Fancy againſt general Practice and Reaſon. For my own Part, what " I have done, I take to be well done, and ſhall make no Difficulty to confeſs and juſtify it. I have, *as you ſay*, " marry'd a *ſtrange Woman*. I ſpeak this with the Liberty of an honeſt Man; and I care not who knows it. I " never meant to make a Secret of it, and you need look no farther for an Informer. I do acknowledge too, that I " have chang'd *my Way of Worſhip*, and reckon it very reaſonable for a Man to examine all Things, that wou'd find " out the *Truth*, without being tied up (as if it were in a *deſpotick* Government) to the Opinion and Humour of one " ſingle Man." *Jewiſh* Antiq. Lib. iv. c. 6.

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however did not go unpuniſh'd; for *Phineas*, the Son of Eleazar the High-Prieſt, fir'd with a juſt Indignation and holy Zeal, follow'd them into the Tent, with a Javelin in his Hand, where, in the very Act of Whoredom *, he thruſt them both through the Body, and, by this Action not only obtain'd an high Commendation from God, but an Eſtabliſhment likewiſe of † the *Aaronical* Prieſthood in him, and his Poſterity, for ever after.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

The total Defeat and Slaughter of the Moabites *and* Midianites.

As ſoon as this Diſorder was quieted, and the Offenders puniſh'd, *Moſes* began to bethink himſelf of revenging the Indignity, which the *Moabites* and *Midianites* had put upon *Iſrael*; and, to this Purpoſe, commanded a Detachment of twelve Thouſand choice Men, *i. e.* * a Thouſand out of every Tribe, to go againſt them; among whom was the † gallant *Phineas*, who took with him the Ark, and what was repoſited therein, together with the ſacred

* Upon this Fact the *Jews* found what they call *the Judgment of Zeal*, which authoriz'd ſuch, as were full of this holy *Fervour*, to puniſh any violent Offenders, thoſe, to wit, who blaſphem'd God, or profan'd the Temple, &c. in the Preſence of ten Men of *Iſrael*, without any formal Proceſs. But this Example of *Phineas* countenances no ſuch Practice; nor can this Action, done upon an extraordinary Occaſion, by a Perſon in a publick *Authority*, mov'd thereunto by a ſtrong divine Impulſe, and (what is a Circumſtance, that ſome People add) in a Commonwealth not perfectly ſettled, be made a *Precedent* for private Men, under a different Situation, to invade the Office of the Magiſtrate, and, with enthuſiaſtick Rage, to perſecute even thoſe, that are moſt innocent; as we plainly find it happen'd among the *Jews*, when, in the latter Times of their Government, they put this Precedent in Execution; of which St *Stephen*, whom they inhumanly ſton'd, and St *Paul*, whom they vow'd to aſſaſſinate, without any Form of Juſtice, are notorious Inſtances. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† This however is to be underſtood with a certain Limitation; becauſe it is manifeſt, that, after ſome Succeſſions in the Line of *Phineas*, the Prieſthood came, for a while, into the Family of *Eli*, who was deſcended from *Ithamar*, the youngeſt Son of *Aaron*. The Reaſon of this Interruption is not mention'd in Scripture; but ſome great Sin, 'tis reaſonable to ſuppoſe, provok'd God to ſet aſide the Line of *Eleazar* for ſome Years, till *Eli*'s Sons likewiſe became ſo wicked, that the Prieſthood was taken from them, and reſtor'd, in the Days of *Solomon*, to the Poſterity of *Phineas*, with whom it continu'd, as long as the Prieſthood laſted. And this is enough to verify the Promiſe of an *everlaſting Prieſthood*, ſince the Words, *Everlaſting*, *Perpetual*, and the like, in a general and indefinite Senſe, denote no more than a *long Duration*. But there is another Way of ſolving this Difficulty: God had, before this Time, limited the Prieſthood to *Aaron* and his Deſcendants, and to them it was to be *an everlaſting Prieſthood, throughout their Generations*, Exod. xl. 15. upon this Account it might properly enough be call'd, as limited to that Family, *the everlaſting Prieſthood*. So that, God does not here promiſe *Phineas, and his Seed after him, an everlaſting Grant* of the Prieſthood, as ſome *Commentators* take it; nor a Grant of *an everlaſting Prieſthood*, as our *Engliſh* Verſion renders it, but rather a Grant of *the everlaſting Prieſthood*, i. e. of the Prieſthood limited to *Aaron* and his Deſcendants by that Appellation. *Selden*, de Succeſſ. Pontif. Lib. i. c. 2. and *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii.

* The Scripture gives us no Account of the Order of Battle between theſe two Armies; but, in all Probability, they were diſpos'd according to the Method of the antient People of *Aſia*; and therefore we may range the *Iſraelites* upon one Line, form'd of twelve *Corps*, conſiſting of a Thouſand Men each, at the Head of which was the *Ark of the Covenant*, ſurrounded by the Prieſts and Levites, whoſe Buſineſs it was to ſound the Charge, as well as defend the Ark. The *Midianites*, we may ſuppoſe, were, in like Manner, rang'd in a *Phalanx*, upon one Line, and, as the *Iſraelites* were doubtleſs much inferior in Number to their Enemies, they made much larger Intervals between the Corps of a thouſand Men each, in order to penetrate the Enemies *Front* in different Places. This was the conſtant Practice of the *Jews*, whenever they were inferior in Number to their Enemies. *Calmet*'s Dictionary under the Word *Midianites*.

† Whether this *Phineas* was ſent to command the Troops, which were appointed by God to take Vengeance on the *Midianites*, or whether he went along with the Army, only to perform ſuch *ſacred* Offices, as ſhould be requir'd by the *General*, (who with more Probability perhaps is thought to be *Joſhua*) are Queſtions ariſing from the Silence of Scripture concerning the chief Commander. *Phineas* indeed was a Man of great Courage, and had lately perform'd a ſingular Piece of Service, which had gain'd him great Reputation; and from hence ſome have imagin'd, that he was the fitter Perſon to be ſent with an Army to *avenge the Lord of* Midian; as it is certain, that, in After-Ages, the *Maccabees* (who were of the Family of the Prieſts) were appointed chief *Commanders*. But then it muſt be conſidered, that theſe *Maccabees* were the ſupreme Governors of the People, and, as ſuch, had a Right to the *military* Command; that, in the War with the *Amorites*, *Moſes* had ſent the Forces under *Joſhua*'s Conduct; and that *Phineas*, in ſhort, had another Province appointed him, which was to take care of the *holy Inſtruments*: But what theſe Inſtruments were, is another Queſtion. Several Interpreters are of Opinion, that they were the *Urim* and *Thummim*, which *Phineas* might take along with him, in order to conſult God, in caſe of any Difficulty that might ariſe in the Management of the War; and to countenance this, they ſuppoſe that *Eleazar* was ſuperannuated, and his Son ſubſtituted in his Room. But it may be juſtly doubted, whether *Phineas*, being the only Son of the High-Prieſt, and not yet capable of that Office, could be ſubſtituted to perform this great Charge, which belong'd to the High-Prieſt alone: Nor do we find any Warrant for *conſulting the Lord by* Urim *and* Thummim, but only before the Tabernacle. It ſeems therefore

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ſacred *Trumpets*, to blow in the Time of Action, in order to animate the Men. The *Jewiſh* Army was but ſmall in Compariſon of the vaſt Numbers they march'd againſt; but God, who put them upon the Expedition, bleſs'd them with ſuch Succeſs, that they ſlew five Kings, and, among them, the wicked Prophet *Balaam*; put every one to the Sword, except Women and Children; and return'd to *Moſes* with a very conſiderable Booty; one *fiftieth* Part of which he order'd to be given to the *Prieſts*, another fiftieth to the *Levites*, and the reſt to be divided among the *Soldiery*.

THE Remembrance however of what Damage the *Midianitiſh* Women had done, by alluring the *Iſraelites* to Idolatry, made him think it unſafe to ſpare their Lives; and therefore he order'd all thoſe, that had ever known Man, as well as all the † Male-children, to be immediately diſpatch'd, and none, * but Virgins, to be ſav'd alive; And yet (what ſhews the Greatneſs of the Victory) the Virgin-Captives amounted to two and thirty thouſand, and the Plunder of Cattle and Flocks conſiſted of ſix hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand Sheep, ſeventy and two thouſand Oxen, and ſixty-one thouſand Aſſes, beſides a great Quantity of rich Goods and Ornaments: And (what makes the Victory ſtill more miraculous) not * one Man on the *Iſraelites* Side (as appears from the Report of the Officers made upon the Muſter) was loſt in this Engagement.

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THE *Officers* of the Army were very ſenſible, that, in ſaving the Captive-Women

therefore much more likely, that, by the *holy Inſtruments*, *Moſes* means the *Ark of the Covenant*, and what was included in it, which, in the following Ages, was wont to be carry'd into the Field, when the People went to fight againſt their Enemies. Nay, *Joſhua* himſelf, not long after this, order'd the *Ark* to be carry'd, with Prieſts blowing Trumpets before it, when he ſurrounded *Jericho*, (Joſh. vi. 4, &c.) And therefore, ſince the *holy Inſtruments* are here join'd with the *Trumpets*, it looks very probable, that they ſhould ſignify the *Ark*. Nor can we apprehend that *Moſes* ran any Riſque in venturing the Ark upon this Occaſion, becauſe God had aſſur'd his People, that they ſhould obtain a compleat Victory over the *Midianites*. It muſt be confeſs'd however, that the Ark is never thus expreſs'd in another Part of Scripture, and therefore perhaps they give as true a Senſe of the Words as any, who make the *holy Inſtruments* and *Trumpets* to be one and the ſame Thing, and the latter no more than an Explication of the former; which Trumpets the Prieſts were commanded to take with them, that they might ſound a Charge, when the Engagement begun, according to their Direction, *Numb.* x. 8, 9. and as the Practice was in future Ages, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 12.

† *Moſes* order'd the Male-children to be ſlain, that thereby he might extirpate the whole Nation, as far as lay in his Power, and prevent their avenging the Death of their Parents, in caſe they were ſuffer'd to live to Man's Eſtate. For it is no hard Matter to conceive, how dangerous ſuch a Number of Slaves, conſcious that they were born free, and had loſt their Liberty with the Maſſacre of their Parents, might have prov'd to a Commonwealth, every where ſurrounded with Enemies. Why he was ſo ſevere againſt the Women we need not wonder, if we do but conſider, that, either by proſtituting themſelves, or their Daughters, they had been the chief Inſtruments of drawing the *Iſraelites* into Idolatry.

——— Etſi nullum memorabile Nomen
Fœmineâ in pœnâ eſt, nec habet victoria laudem;
Extinxiſſe nefas tamen, & ſumpſiſſe merentis
Laudabor pœnas. ——— Virg. Æn. Lib. ii. ver. 583.

Bibliotheca Bibl. and *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, on *Numb.* xxx. 17.

* The *Jews* have a Tradition, that, in order to find out who were *real* Virgins, the young Women were plac'd, at a proper Diſtance with other Women, and all commanded to fix their Eyes upon the High-Prieſt's *Mitre*; whereupon thoſe, who had *known Man*, turn'd inſtantly as pale as Aſhes, and thoſe, that had not, became as red as Fire. But there ſeems to be no great Occaſion for this Miracle, when either the Appearance of an unqualify'd Age, or the Examination of ſome ſelect Matrons might determine the Matter as well. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on *Numb.* xxxi. 18.

* In the vth Chapter of the 1ſt Book of *Maccabees*, we have an Account of another Victory of the like Nature, when *Judas*, after having, ſeveral Times, defeated *Timotheus* the Heathen General, aſſaulted the City of *Ephron* a whole Day and a Night, and all without the Loſs of a Man. For *they went up to Mount* Sion *with Joy and Gladneſs, where they offered Burnt-Offerings, becauſe not one of them was ſlain, until they had returned in Peace.* And (if other Hiſtorians may be credited) the like has happen'd among other Nations. After the famous and bloody Battle of *Leuctra*, the *Lacedæmonians* and *Arcadians* had a very ſharp Engagement, in which the latter loſt many Thouſands of Men, and the former not one: And, in a Sea-Engagement, between the *Portugueſe* and the *Indians*, *Oſorius Lucitanus* tells us, that the *Portugueſe* Admiral, *Pacheco*, ſucceeded ſo well, that he kill'd above fifteen hundred of the Infidels, without the Loſs of one Man. *De Rebus Emman.* Lib. iii. But whether this had any Thing miraculous in it, or was only the Effect of God's ordinary Providence, we ſhall not pretend to determine. *Bibliotheca Bibl.* on *Numb.* xxi. 49.

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men alive, they had tranſgreſs'd their Commiſſion; and therefore * they preſented a great Quantity of Jewels, and other rich Spoils, both as an *expiatory Offering* to atone for their Offence, and for a *gratulatory Offering*, in Acknowledgment of God's Goodneſs, in giving them ſo great and ſignal a Victory.

Moſes *divides the Country of* Canaan *among the Tribes.*

THE *Iſraelites*, by this Time, had made themſelves Maſters of the Country, that lay on the *Midianitiſh* Side of *Jordan*; and the Tribes of † *Reuben* and *Gad*, together with the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, obſerving that the Country was fertile, and ſtor'd with good Paſturage, deſir'd of *Moſes*, that they might be permitted to ſettle there, as a Place very commodious for them, who had large Stocks of Cattle; which (upon Condition that they ſhould go over *Jordan*, and aſſiſt their Brethren in the Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan*) *Moſes* conſented to. And, as they were now in the Neighbourhood of *Canaan*, and juſt ready to enter upon the Poſſeſſion of it, he took this Opportunity to appoint the Limits of what they were to conquer, and the Diſtribution of it by † Way of Lot, which he committed to the Management of *Joſhua* and *Eleazar*, at the Head of the *Chiefs* of each Tribe.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

Makes Joſhua *his Succeſſor in the Government.*

JOSHUA was appointed by God to ſucceed *Moſes* in his Commiſſion; and therefore, to prevent any Conteſt after his Death, he firſt laid his own Hands upon him, and then preſented him to *Eleazar* the High-Prieſt, who, in a ſolemn Form of Admiſſion, and in the Preſence of all the People, inveſted him with the Office of being the *Leader*, and *General* of all *Iſrael*, after *Moſes* had given him ſeveral Directions relating to his Office, and one more eſpecially, which concern'd his conſulting of God by Way of *Urim* and *Thummim* upon every great Emergency. In the Diviſion of the Country, *Moſes* aſſign'd eight and forty Cities, together with

* The *Jeruſalem Targum* ſuppoſes, that, when theſe Officers made their Offerings, they addreſs'd themſelves to *Moſes* in the following Manner. "Foraſmuch as the Lord has deliver'd the *Midianites* into our Hands, and we have "ſubdu'd the Country, enter'd into their Chambers, and ſeen their fair and charming Daughters, took their Crowns "of Gold from off their Heads, their Rings from their Ears and Fingers, their Bracelets from their Arms, and their "Jewels from their Necks and Boſoms; therefore far be it from us to have turn'd our Eyes towards them. We had "no Manner of Concern or Converſation with them, leſt we ſhould thereby die the Death of the Wicked in *Ge-*"*henna*. And let this be had in Remembrance on our Behalf, in the Day of the *Great Judgment*, to make a *Recon-*"*ciliation* for our Souls before the Lord.".

† In the Diviſion of the Country, which the *Iſraelites* took from *Sihon* and *Og*, two vanquiſh'd Kings, that liv'd on the Eaſt Side of *Jordan*, and whoſe Dominions extended from the River *Arnon*, even as far as Mount *Hermon*, Deut. iii. 8. *Moſes* gave to the Tribe of *Reuben* the *ſouthern*, or rather the *South-weſt* Part of the Country, ſo that they were bounded to the *South* with the River *Arnon*; to the *Weſt*, with *Jordan*; and to the *North* and *Eaſt*, with the Tribe of *Gad*. In this Tribe ſtood *Heſbon*, the *capital* City of the Kingdom of *Sihon*, ſituate on the Hills over-againſt *Jericho*, about twenty Miles diſtant from the River *Jordan*. The Tribe of *Gad* was bounded with the River *Jordan*, to the *Weſt*; with the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, to the *North*; with the *Ammonites*, to the *Eaſt*; and with the Tribe of *Reuben*, to the *South*. In this Tribe ſtood *Aſtaroth*, the capital City of the Kingdom of *Og*, which very likely obtain'd its Name from an *Idol* which was much worſhipp'd in thoſe Times and Parts. How the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh* came to chuſe to ſtay on the *Eaſt* Side of *Jordan*, the ſacred Hiſtory makes no mention; but it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that, after they found that the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad* had ſucceeded in their Petition, they likewiſe might repreſent to *Moſes* the great Stock of Cattle which they had; that the Country would be equally commodious for them, and was over large for two Tribes alone to occupy: Nor is it to be doubted, but that *Moſes* was inclinable to liſten to their Allegation, becauſe the Sons of *Machir*, the Son of *Manaſſeh*, had, by their Valour, ſubdu'd a great Part of the Country, where they ſettled; which was bounded by the Tribe of *Gad*, to the *South*; with the Sea of *Cinnereth* (afterwards call'd the Lake of *Genneſareth*, or the Sea of *Galilee*) together with the Courſe of the River *Jordan*, from its Head to the ſaid Sea, to the *Weſt*; with Mount *Lebanon*, or more peculiarly Mount *Hermon*, to the *North*, and *North-Eaſt*; and with the Mountains of *Gilead* to the *Eaſt*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

† Nothing could more prudently be contriv'd, than this Partition of the Country by *Lot*, and making *Joſhua* and the *High-Prieſt* Superintendants of it; ſince it was the only one, that could effectually prevent all Murmurings and Quarrellings among ſuch an obſtinate People, as the *Jews* were. However, as the Lots were to bear a Proportion to the Bigneſs of each Tribe and Family, it is ſuppos'd from what follow'd, that every Tribe firſt drew its Lot for its own Canton, and that then there were proper Perſons appointed to meaſure out a Quantity of Land for each Family, according to their Bigneſs: But whether this laſt was done by this or any other Method; whether the *Subdiviſions* between the Families were likewiſe carry'd on by Lot, or otherwiſe, ſure it is, that we read of no Broils or Jealouſies, that it ever occaſion'd among them. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 7.

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with their Suburbs, for the *Levites* to live in, and withal order'd, that ſix of theſe ſhould be made *Cities of Refuge*, whither † the *innocent* Manſlayer, who had kill'd his Neighbour by Chance, might betake himſelf, and live; tho' at the ſame Time, he made all proper Proviſion, that the *wilful* Murtherer ſhould certainly be put to Death: But in this, and all other *capital* Caſes, he made it a Law, that none ſhould be convicted upon the Evidence of one ſingle Perſon.

Makes his Speeches to the People.

THE nearer that *Moſes* approach'd his Death, the more he expreſs'd his Concern for the Welfare of the People, and therefore, on the *firſt* Day of the eleventh Month, (which anſwers our *January*) and in the *fortieth* Year from their Departure out of *Egypt*, being then encamp'd on the Plains of *Moab*, by the Banks of the River *Jordan*, he call'd them all together, and, at different Times, made two very tender and pathetick Speeches, wherein he briefly related to them all that had befallen their Fathers, ſince the Time they left *Egypt*; the gracious Dealings of God with them; their continual Murmurings, and Rebellions againſt him; and the many ſevere Judgments, that had follow'd thereupon, even to his *own* Excluſion from the promis'd Land. He gave them a *Summary* of all the Laws, which the divine Goodneſs had calculated for their Happineſs; and, having repeated the *Decalogue* almoſt Word for Word, he reminded them of the ſolemn and dreadful Manner, in which it was deliver'd from Mount *Sinai*, and of the manifold Obligations, they lay under, to a ſtrict Obſervance of it. He encourag'd them to be faithful to God, by aſſuring them, that if they kept his Commandments, they ſhould not fail of having innumerable Bleſſings heap'd upon them, and by threatning them with all Manner of Calamities, if ſo be they departed from them. He renew'd the Covenant, which their Fathers had made with God at *Horeb*; commanded them to proclaim, on * the Mountains of *Gerizim* and *Hebal* beyond *Jordan*, Bleſſings to thoſe, that obſerv'd, and Curſes to thoſe, that broke this COVENANT; and to erect an Altar there, whereon they were to † write, in a legible Character, the Terms and Conditions of it.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

THESE,

† The Perſon, who, without any premeditated Malice, kill'd his Neighbour *accidentally*, had the beſt Proviſion imaginable made for his Eſcape. For the Ways, that led to the Cities of *Refuge*, were to be made very plain and broad, and kept in good Repair. Two *Students of the Law* were to accompany him, that, if the Avenger of Blood ſhould overtake him, before he got to the City, they might endeavour to pacify him by wiſe Perſuaſions; and that he might not miſs his Way to the Place, whither he intended to flee, there were Poſts erected, where two or three Ways met, with the Word *Miklal*, i. e. the *City of Refuge*, inſcrib'd on them, to direct him into the right Road, that led to it. *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Numb.* xxxv. 13.

* † Theſe two Mountains are ſituate in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, near *Shechem*, in the Province of *Samaria*, and are ſo near to one another, that nothing but a Valley of about two hundred Paces wide parts them; ſo that the Prieſts, ſtanding and pronouncing the Bleſſings and Curſes, that were to attend the Doers or Violators of the Law in a very loud and diſtinct Manner, might well enough be heard by the People, that were ſeated on the Sides of the two Hills, eſpecially if the Prieſts were advanc'd upon Pulpits, (as *Ezra* afterwards was, *Nehem.* viii. 4.) and had their Pulpits plac'd at proper Diſtances. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentary, in *Deut.* xxvii.

† In this twenty-ſeventh Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, the *Iſraelites* were commanded to *write*, *upon* certain *Stones*, *all the Words of the Law very plainly*, ver. 8. How many theſe Stones were the Scripture makes no mention; but ſome are of Opinion, that they were *twelve*, according to the Number of the Pillars, which *Moſes* employ'd, (*Exod.* xxiv. 4.) when he made the Covenant between God and his People. Knew we for Certainty the Number of the Stones, we might better gueſs, what Part of the Law it was, which *Moſes* order'd to be engraven upon them; ſince, by Reaſon of this Uncertainty, ſome will have it to be the whole *Pentateuch*; others, no more than the *Decalogue*; ſome, that *Summary* of the Laws, which is contain'd in this Book of *Deuteronomy*; and others, the Curſes, which follow from *Deut.* xxvii. 15. to the End of Chap. xxviii. which ſeem to be more likely, becauſe they contain'd ſelect Precepts, and the laſt of them ſeems to comprize the whole Law, ver. 26. and *Joſh.* viii. 34. But however we underſtand this, it is certain, that before the Uſe of *Paper* was found out, the *Ancients*, particularly the *Phœnicians*, and *Egyptians*, were wont to write their Minds upon Stones, as ſeveral Authors mention'd by *Huetius* (Demonſtrat. Evang. Propoſ. 4. Chap. 2.) do abundantly teſtify. Nay, he obſerves, that this Cuſtom continu'd long after the Invention of Paper, eſpecially if Men deſir'd, that any Thing ſhould be publickly known, and tranſmitted down to Poſterity. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. l. 12. and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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THESE, and ſeveral other Directions, relating to their future Conduct in the Land of *Canaan*, *Moſes* not only deliver'd to the People by Word of Mouth, but order'd to be written in a Book, which he committed to the Care and Cuſtody of the *Levites*, who, by God's Appointment, laid it up on the Side of the Ark, there to remain a Witneſs againſt the Children of *Iſrael*, in caſe they ſhould rebel. And, that they might never want a proper Fund of Devotion, he compos'd a Song, or Poem, which he not only repeated to the People, but gave Orders likewiſe that they ſhould all learn it by Heart: For therein he had expreſs'd, in a very elegant Manner, the many Benefits and Favours of God to his People; their Ingratitude and Forgetfulneſs of him; the Puniſhment, wherewith he had afflicted them; and the Comminations of greater Judgments, if they perſiſted to provoke him by a Repetition of their Follies.

Moſes *takes a Farewel of the People, and goes up to* Piſgah, *to take a View of the promis'd Land, and there dies.*

SUCH was the Care and Concern of the *Jewiſh* Law-giver for the Welfare of the People, after he was gone: And therefore, perceiving that the Time of his Diſſolution was now at hand, he call'd them together; and, having taken a ſolemn Farewel of them, in a *prophetick* Bleſſing, which he pronounc'd upon each Tribe, as *Jacob* had done juſt before his Death, he went up * to the Top of *Piſgah*, over-againſt *Jericho*, from whence he might take a full View of the Country, which God had promis'd to *Abraham*'s Poſterity. For, tho' he was an hundred and twenty Years old, yet his natural Strength and Vigour was not impair'd, nor had his Eye-ſight in the leaſt fail'd him; ſo that he was able to ſurvey the beauteous Proſpect, which the delightful Town and Plains of *Jericho*, and the fair Cliffs, and lofty Cedars of *Lebanon* afforded him; and, having done this, he reſign'd his Soul into the Hands of *Seraphims*, who were waiting to convey it into an happier *Canaan*, than what he had been ſurveying; and, to prevent the Danger of the People's idolizing him when he was gone *, God himſelf took Care to bury his Body in ſo ſecret a Manner, in the Land of *Moab*, over-againſt *Beth-peor*, that the Place of his * Sepulchre was never yet diſcover'd.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

THUS

* The Mountains of *Abarim* were a Ridge of Hills between the two Rivers *Arnon* and *Jordan*. One Part of theſe Mountains was diſtinguiſh'd by the Name of *Nebo*, as it appears from *Deut.* xxxii. 49. and comparing this with *Deut.* xxxiv. 1. we ſhall find that *Nebo* and *Piſgah* were one and the ſame Mountain, and, that if there was any Diſtinction between the Names, it was probably this, that the Top of the Mountain was more peculiarly call'd *Piſgah*, becauſe it comes from a Root, which ſignifies to *elevate*, or *raiſe up*, and ſo may very properly denote the *Top* or *Summit* of any Mountain. Not far from *Nebo*, was *Beth-peor*, which very probably was ſo call'd from ſome Deity of the ſame Name, that was worſhipp'd there. But of all theſe Mountains it muſt be obſerv'd, that, tho' they are ſaid to be in the Land of *Moab*, yet they really ſtood in the Territories of *Sihon*, King of the *Amorites*, however they retain'd their old Names, becauſe once they belong'd to the *Moabites*. Numb. xxi. 26.

* This very Reaſon we have in R. *Levi Ben Gerſhom*. "Future Generations, *ſays he*, might perhaps have made "a God of him, becauſe of the Fame of his Miracles: For do we not ſee how ſome of the *Iſraelites* err'd in the "*brazen Serpent*, which *Moſes* made? And what then would they not have done, had they but known where his "Remains were laid?" For this Reaſon, very likely, it was, that, how much ſoever *Moſes* was in love with *Canaan*, he did not deſire to be carry'd thither, to be bury'd with his Anceſtors, as *Joſeph* did; becauſe his Interment in that Country might have prov'd of dangerous Conſequence, if in their Diſtreſs (eſpecially in the Captivity of the Land) the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould have run to his *Sepulchre*, and begg'd of him to pray for them, whoſe Prayers and Interceſſion, in their Behalf, they had found, in his Life-Time, ſo very prevalent. *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Deut.* xxxiv. 6.

* But, notwithſtanding all this Precaution of God, the Chriſtians boaſt that they have diſcover'd the Sepulchre, which has been kept ſecret for ſo many Ages. For in the Year 1655, ſome Goats that were ſeparated from the reſt of the Flock, went to feed in a certain Place, in the Mountain *Nebo*, and return'd from thence ſo odoriferous and perfum'd, that the Shepherds, aſtoniſh'd at ſo wonderful a Prodigy, ran preſently to conſult with the Patriarch of the *Maronites*, who ſent thither two Monks from Mount *Lebanon*, and they diſcover'd a Monument, on which was this Inſcription, *Moſes, the Servant of the Lord*. But there is too much Reaſon to think, that this is all a Fiction, on Purpoſe to raiſe the Reputation of the *Maronites*; as *Baſnage*, in his Hiſtory and Religion of the *Jews*, has ſufficiently prov'd, Lib. iv. cap. 17.

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THUS died * *Moſes*, the * illuſtrious Prophet and Servant of God; and, when the People of *Iſrael* came to underſtand that he was dead, with great Solemnity, they lamented for him, for the Space of thirty Days.

From Numb. xviii to the End of Deuteronomy.

The OBJECTION.

" WHOEVER wrote the Cha-
" racter of *Moſes*, at the Conclu-
" ſion of *Deuteronomy*, (for we can hardly
" preſume that it was *Moſes* himſelf) has
" not perhaps tranſcended the Truth, in
" calling him a *Prophet*, ſuperior to any,
" that had *then* aroſe in *Iſrael*, highly
" in Favour of God, and admitted to a
" nearer Communion with him; but
" certainly he means to put a Banter upon
" our Faith, when he would perſuade us,
" that a Perſon an hundred and twenty
" Years old (as *Moſes* was) could take a
" perfect View of the Land of *Canaan*
" *(f)*, which extends from *Egypt* to *Phœ-*
" *nicia*, *ſeventy* Leagues in *Length*, and,
" from the *Mediterranean* Sea to the
" Mountains of *Libanus*, at leaſt, *thirty*
" Leagues in *Breadth:* Nor can we ſee,
" for what Reaſon (if ſuch Pains was
" taken to ſhew him the promis'd Land)
" God ſhould be ſo highly provok'd a-
" gainſt his favourite Servant, as to ſeclude
" him, when juſt at the Entrance of it,
" from taking Poſſeſſion of it.

" BUT he did not do ſo with *Phineas*,
" the Prieſt, whom he ſo highly extols,
" tho' his Act was certainly more raſh
" and unjuſtifiable, than any we find re-
" corded of *Moſes*. *Zimri*, we are told,
" was a *Prince of a chief Houſe among*
" *the Simeonites*, and conſequently, was
" not

* Nothing can be plainer from the Text, than that *Moſes* did die, and was really bury'd; nay, *Joſephus* tells us, that the Scripture affirms, that he died, leſt People ſhou'd think, becauſe of the Excellency of his Perſon, that he was ſtill alive, and with God. And yet, notwithſtanding this, ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors do poſitively affirm, that he was tranſlated into Heaven, where he ſtands, and miniſters before God: And, of thoſe, who admit of his Death, and that his Soul and Body were really ſeparated, the *major* Part will not allow, that he died a common Death; for their Notion is, that *his Soul departed with a Kiſs*, becauſe he is ſaid to die, *al pi*, *at the Mouth* (as it is literally in the Hebrew, *i. e. according to the Word) of God*; but if there be any Senſe in the Expreſſion, it muſt be, that he parted with his Soul with great Chearfulneſs and Serenity of Mind. *Witſius*'s Miſcel. ſacra.

* The Commendation, which the Author of *Eccleſiaſticus* gives *Moſes*, is conceiv'd in theſe Words: —— " *Moſes*
" was beloved of God and Men, and his Memorial is bleſſed. The Lord made him like to the glorious Saints, and
" magnified him ſo, that his Enemies ſtood in Fear of him, and by his Word he cauſed the Wonders to ceaſe, and
" he made him glorious in the Sight of Kings, gave him Ordinances for his People, and ſhewed him part of his
" Glory. He ſanctified him in his Faithfulneſs and Meekneſs, and choſe him out of all Men. He made him to
" hear his Voice, and brought him into the dark Cloud, and gave him Commandments before his Face, even the
" Law of Life and Knowledge, that he might teach *Jacob* his Covenant, and *Iſrael* his Judgments," Chap. xlv. 1, *&c.* The Character which *Joſephus* gives him is to this Effect: —— " He was a Man of admirable Wiſdom,
" and one, that made the beſt Uſe of what he underſtood: An excellent Speaker, and no Man better ſkill'd in
" moving the Affections of the People than himſelf: And ſo great a Maſter of his Paſſions, that he liv'd as though
" he had none, or as if he only knew them by their Names, or by obſerving them in others. Never was there a
" greater Captain, nor a Prophet equal to him; for all his Words were Oracles." So true is the Character, which the ſacred Writer has given of him. *There aroſe not a Prophet ſince in* Iſrael, *like unto* Moſes, *whom the Lord knew Face to Face, in all the Signs, and the Wonders, which the Lord ſent him to do in the Land of* Egypt, *to* Pharaoh, *and to all his Servants, and to all the Land, and in all that mighty Hand, and in all that great Terror, which* Moſes *ſhewed in the Sight of all* Iſrael, *Deut.* xxxiv. 10, *&c.* " Nor was he leſs famous to Poſterity for his Writings, than he was to
" the Age he liv'd in for his Actions." For, beſides the *Pentateuch*, (which is all of his own Compoſition, except the *concluſive* Chapter) the Ancients generally thought, that he was the Author of the Book of *Job*, and of eleven Pſalms, which begin at the 90th, and end with the 100th, as there were once other Books, ſuch as his *Leſſer Geneſis*, the *Revelation of* Moſes, the *Aſcenſion of* Moſes, the *Aſſumption of* Moſes, and the *myſterious Books of* Moſes, cited by ſome antient Writers, which were likewiſe aſcrib'd to him. And though they have long ſince loſt their Authority, and been exploded as *ſpurious*; yet are they ſtill an Argument of the Greatneſs of his Name, when ſo many Authors, to recommend their own Performances, were ſo ambitious to aſſume it. *Joſephus*'s Antiq. Lib. iv. c. 8. and *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Moſes*.

(*f*) *Lamy*'s Introduction, Lib. i. c. 3.

A. M. 2515, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

" not accountable to *Phineas* for his Be-
" haviour. His Behaviour, 'tis own'd,
" was vile and profligate enough, but there
" then were proper Courts of Judicature,
" wherein to implead him, and to bring
" him to condign Puniſhment. The *Le-*
" *vites* were remarkable for ſlaying ſome
" Idolaters in another Caſe, *Exod.* xxxii.
" 27, 28. but then they had a divine
" Commiſſion for what they did, but
" for any hot-brain'd Zealot, without any
" Call from God, or Order from his Su-
" periors, to take *the Sword*, and to turn
" *Avenger to execute his Wrath* upon ano-
" ther Perſon, that he thinks does ill;
" this is invading the Magiſtrate's Office
" with a Witneſs, diſſolving all civil Or-
" der and Government, encouraging Mur-
" thers and Aſſaſſinations, and what has
" been a fatal Precedent to incite and abet
" the moſt inhuman Actions.

" It cannot be deny'd, indeed, but
" that God was very kind to the *Iſrae-*
" *lites*, during their Sojourning in a naked
" and barren Wilderneſs; but *Moſes* ſeems
" to carry the Matter a little too far,
" when he tells them, *(g) that their Rai-*
" *ment and Shoes waxed not old upon them,*
" *neither did their Feet ſwell for forty*
" *Years:* Unleſs we can ſuppoſe, that
" God made *their Shoes of Iron*, and their
" Coats of *Buff*; enlarg'd their Cloaths,
" in Proportion as they grew bigger, and
" wrought a perpetual Miracle upon eve-
" ry Garment they wore, which is a
" little too much for our preſent Dige-
" ſtion.

" When *Balaam* ſpake in Commen-
" dation of the *Iſraelites*, he certainly
" ſpake by a divine Impulſe, for he him-
" ſelf never wiſh'd them well; and yet,
" the Compliment is not only extravagant,
" but quite abhorrent to Truth, when he
" declares, that *(h) God had not beheld*
" *Iniquity in* Jacob, *nor ſeen Perverſeneſs*
" *in* Iſrael, tho' it is notorious, that there
" was not a more perverſe Generation
" under the Copes of Heaven; a *ſtiff-*
" *neck'd People*, and *rebellious againſt the*
" *Lord*, as both the Lord, and his Ser-
" vant *Moſes* calls them. From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

" Nor is the Account, which *Balaam*
" gives us of himſelf, leſs abſurd and con-
" tradictory, than what he tells us of the
" *Iſraelites:* For, when, in that noted
" *Proem* to his Prophecy, he begins *with*
" *(i)* Balaam, *the Son of* Beor, *hath ſaid,*
" *who heard the Words of God, and ſaw*
" *the Viſion of the Almighty*; what can
" we imagine that he means by all this?
" Can any one ſuppoſe, that God would
" ever communicate any *Revelation* to
" ſuch an impious Wretch, as he was
" known to be? Or, that the Prince of
" *Moab*, and all his Council ſhould be
" ſo far infatuated, as to think that it lay
" in the Power of any Man (much leſs
" of ſuch a *Profligate)* to do either Good
" or Evil to their Enemies, and, by the
" Breath of his Mouth, to alter the Fate
" of War?

" *MOSES* indeed may be ſuppos'd to
" have had ſome Portion of a divine Spi-
" rit reſiding in him, and might therefore
" foretel the *(k) Coming of a Prophet,*
" *raiſed up among his Brethren*, or de-
" ſcended from a *Jewiſh Race*, *like unto*
" *himſelf*, which nevertheleſs, might re-
" late to *Joſhua*, or any other Prophet,
" as well as the *Meſſias:* But that ſo
" wicked a Miſcreant, as *Balaam*, ſhou'd
" propheſy of our Saviour's *Advent*, *(l)*
" under the Image of a *Star* coming out
" of *Jacob*, *and a Sceptre riſing out of*
" Iſrael, is the moſt incongruous Thing
" in Nature; and therefore, if there be a
" Deſignation of any Perſon in the Words,
" it muſt neceſſarily refer us to ſome ſuch
" King as *David*, who, in a literal Senſe,
" *ſmote the Corners of* Moab, *and deſtroyed*
" *the Children of* Seth.

" The Truth is, the whole Adventure
" of *Balaam* and his *Aſs* is ſo very *ro-*
" *mantick*, that we do not well know
" what to make of it. For, in the firſt
" Place, if God was averſe to his going
" with

(g) Deut. viii. 4. and xxix. 5. (h) Numb. xxiii. 21. (i) Numb. xxiv. 3, 4. (k) Deut. xviii. 15. (l) Numb. xxiv. 17.

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" with the Princes of *Moab*, why did " he permit him to go? After ſuch Permiſ- " ſion, why was *his Anger kindled againſt* " *him* for going? If he had been minded " to obſtruct his Journey, this certainly " might have been done in a much more " eaſy and compendious Way, than by giv- " ing himſelf the Trouble to ſend an An- " gel Expreſs, and *(m) to open the Mouth* " *of the dumb Aſs, to forbid the Madneſs* " *of the Prophet.*

" IN *Poets*, and other viſionary Wri- " ters, we ſometimes read of *dumb* Crea- " tures ſpeaking. The Ram of *Phrix-* " *us*, the Horſe of *Achilles*, the Bull of " *Europa*, &c. are Inſtances of this Kind: " But, in ſo grave and inſpir'd an Author " as *Moſes* is reputed to be, and on ſo " trivial an Occaſion as this, 'tis the Height " of Abſurdity to meet with a *loquacious* " Aſs; and (what is the Wonder of all) " to find *Balaam* not at all ſtartled to " hear her ſpeak, but immediately en- " tering into Diſcourſe with her, as if " they had been old Companions, and " had held many a Dialogue together be- " fore.

" *BALAAM*, in ſhort, was an odd " Mixture of a Man. Here we find him " endeavouring what he could to *curſe* " the People of God, and immediately " profeſſing that he *would (n) take Heed* " *to ſpeak nothing*, but *what the Lord* " *ſhould put in his Mouth*; for the *Wages* " *of Unrighteouſneſs* now betaking him- " ſelf to diabolical *Enchantments*, and a- " non, in a devotional Fit, ſending up " his Prayer to God, *(o) Let me die the* " *Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt* " *End be like his.* However, he was far " from obtaining his Requeſt; for tho' " one Part of the Hiſtory ſays, that *(p)* " *he went and returned to his Place*, i. e. " his own Houſe in *Meſopotamia*, upon " the Banks of *Euphrates*; yet we find " in another, that, together with five of " the *Midianitiſh Kings*, *(q)* Balaam *the* " *Son of* Beor *was ſlain by the Sword:* So " very inconſiſtent is the Account which " *Moſes* has given us of this wild *En-* " *chanter.*

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

" IN recounting the manifold Mercies " of God, *Moſes* reminds the People, that " *(r) in the great and terrible Wilderneſs*, " where they ſojourn'd ſo long, *there* " *were Serpents and Scorpions* in Abun- " dance, ſo that it is no Wonder at all " that they were ſtung with them; the " Wonder is, how they came to eſcape ſo " long, and how the *Image* of a Serpent, " which had done them ſo much Harm, " ſhould cure them by Intuition. Men " generally abhor the Sight even of the " Figure of any Thing, that they have " ſuffer'd much by; and therefore we " cannot but conceive, that this Brazen " Serpent fix'd upon a Pole, muſt have " been a Means to inflame, rather than " allay the Poiſon, which the living ones " had infus'd, in all Perſons directed to " look up to it.

" BUT the *Miſtake of proper Means* is " not the worſt Imputation, that this " Part of the *Moſaick* Hiſtory throws " upon God. *(s) God is merciful, and* " *gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant* " *in Mercy and Truth, forgiving Iniquity,* " *Tranſgreſſion, and Sin*; and yet herein " is he repreſented, not only as raving, " and *(t) ſwearing in his Wrath*, but " commanding the *Iſraelites* likewiſe to " extirpate whole Nations, who had ne- " ver done them any Injury; and, in " doing of this, to proceed with the ut- " moſt Barbarity, to ſlay Men, Women, " and Children, whereof the *laſt*, at " leaſt, (in Hopes of their Converſion) " might more properly have been ſav'd " alive.

" AGAIN, God is the general Father, " and univerſal Lover of Mankind; for " *(u) he is no Reſpecter of Perſons, but in* " *every Nation, he that feareth him and* " *worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted with* " *him*; and yet, as if the reſt of Mankind " were mere Reprobates, we find him

(m) Numb. xxii. 28. and 2 Pet. ii. 16. (n) Numb. xxiii. 12. (o) Ver. 10. (p) Numb. xxiv. 25. (q) Numb. xxxi. 8. (r) Deut. viii. 15. (s) Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. (t) Deut. i. 34. (u) Acts x. 34, 35.

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" enjoining the *Iſraelites* to live a ſecluſe, " unſociable Life; to have no Intercourſe " with other Nations; but to look upon " them with an evil Eye, and as if they " were their Enemies. Once more, God " is a generous Benefactor: What he does, " he does *freely*, and without any By-" ends; what he gives, he gives, *chear-" fully*, and *upbraideth not*; and therefore " we cannot reconcile it to theſe Proper-" ties of his, that he ſhould be ſo fre-" quently caſting his People in the Teeth " with their former wretched Condition, " ſo inceſſantly reminding them, *(x)* that " *they were Bond-Men* in *Egypt*, and " that it was his Hand, and ſtretch'd-out " Arm, that deliver'd them. In a Word, " whatever argues Vanity or Inſult, Nar-" rowneſs of Mind, or Cruelty of Tem-" per, can never belong to God; and " therefore whatever *politick* Reaſons " the *Iſraelites* might have for depopula-" ting whole Nations, and making the " Land of *Canaan* their own, they could " never receive this Injunction from the " Fountain of all Goodneſs; *(y) Thou " ſhalt ſmite them, and utterly deſtroy " them, and make no Covenant with them, " nor have Compaſſion on them*; *(z)* a " Command not only abhorrent to the " Nature of God, but inconſiſtent like-" wiſe with all thoſe Duties, that Men, " as Men, owe to one another."

Anſwer'd, by ſhewing who the Author of the laſt Chapter of Deuteronomy *was.*

Both *Philo* and *Joſephus* are of Opinion, that the Account of *Moſes*'s Death, and Burial, of the Mourning, which the *Iſraelites* made for him, and of the Character, which in the Concluſion of *Deuteronomy*, we find recorded of him, was penn'd by *Moſes* himſelf, in Conſequence of the *Preſcience*, which God was pleas'd to communicate to him: And the Reaſon *(a)*, which *Joſephus* gives for his thus relating the Circumſtances of his *Death* beforehand, is, that the People, out of the great Veneration they had for his Perſon, might not imagine that he was *tranſlated*.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

But ſuppoſe this Account to have been written after the Death of *Moſes*, by *Joſhua*, *Eleazar*, or the *ſeventy Elders*, or, (as ſome imagine) much later, by *Samuel*, or even by *Ezra* himſelf, who, after the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, made a Reviſal of the ſacred Books; ſuppoſe it, I ſay, to have been written by any other Hand whatever, yet this can no Ways affect the Authority of the reſt of the *Pentateuch*, or imply that *Moſes* was not the Writer of it, unleſs we will be ſo perverſe as to ſay, that the Addition of ſome few *Lines*, or even of a whole *Page*, as an *Appendix* to another Man's Book, makes the Book no longer *his*.

There is another Opinion, which ſeems very conſonant both to Reaſon, and Matter of Fact, and that is, that the laſt of the Books of *Moſes*, viz. the Book of *Deuteronomy*, ended with his prophetick Bleſſing † upon the twelve Tribes, *(b) happy art thou, O* Iſrael! *Who is like unto thee, O People, ſaved by the Lord*, &c? and that what makes now the *laſt* Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, was formerly the *firſt* of *Joſhua*, but thence remov'd and adjoin'd to the other by Way of *Supplement*.

Before the Invention of Sections, and other Diviſions, or ſo much as of Pauſes, and Points of Diſtinction; and when ſometimes ſeveral Books were connected together, and follow'd each other upon the ſame Roll (as the ancient Method of Writing was) it is no hard Matter to conceive, how eaſily the *Beginning* of one Book might be transferr'd to the *End* of another, and, in Proceſs of Time, make that be reputed the *Concluſion* of *Deuteronomy*, which was *originally* intended for the *Introduction* to the Book of *Joſhua*. And, if this be the Caſe, 'tis no Wonder, that we meet with ſeveral Paſſages in this *Introduction*,

(x) Deut. xvi. 12. *(y)* Deut. vii. 2. *(z)* Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, p. 273. *(a)* *Jewiſh* Hiſtory, Lib. iv. c. 7.

† All the Tribes are bleſſed, except the Tribe of *Simeon*, and his is included in what is ſaid concerning *Judah*.

(b) Deut. xxxiii. 29.

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Introduction, which were in Reality wrote by a later Hand than *Moſes*; but then; by whomſoever, or at what Time ſoever, theſe Paſſages were wrote, whether before, or after the Deſtruction of the firſt Temple, they can no ways invalidate the Authority of the other Parts of the Book of *Deuteronomy*, to which *imprudently*, and by Way of Miſtake perhaps, they came to be annex'd: Nor can the *Canonicalneſs* of theſe very Paſſages be call'd in queſtion; ſince it is agreed on all Hands, that they were written by a Perſon of a *prophetick* Spirit, and had in all Ages the Sanction of the great *Synagogue*.

No Impoſſibility in Moſes's *taking a View of the Land of* Canaan.

BUT whoever was the Author of this additional Chapter in *Deuteronomy*, it cannot well be accounted an impoſſible Thing for God to ſhew *Moſes* the Compaſs of the Land of *Canaan*, from the Top of Mount *Nebo*. The *Jews* indeed have a Notion, that God laid before him a Map of the whole Country, and ſhew'd him therein how every Part of it was ſituate; where each *Valley* lay, each *Mountain* ſtood, each *River* ran, and for what remarkable *Product* each Place was renown'd: But, if this had been all, we cannot ſee for what Reaſon *Moſes* was order'd to go upon the higheſt Part of the Mount, ſince in the loweſt Plains of *Moab*, he might have given him a Demonſtration of this Kind every whit as well.

IT was for ſome Purpoſe therefore, that the *ſacred* Hiſtorian has inform'd us, that tho' *Moſes* was an hundred and twenty Years old, *yet his Eyes were not dim:* And if we ſuppoſe, that, upon this Occaſion, God ſtrengthened them, with a greater Vigour than ordinary, to enable him to take a larger Proſpect of the Country, ſo that from this Eminence he might ſee *Dan* and Mount *Lebanon*, to the *North*; the Lake of *Sodom* and the City *Zoar*, to the *South*; the *Mediterranean Sea* to the *Weſt*; and (as the Town and Country of *Jericho* was juſt at Hand) he might eaſily diſcern the Land of *Gilead* to the *North-eaſt*. This indeed may be a Compaſs, above the Stretch of human Sight; but if God was pleas'd to aſſiſt his *viſive* Faculties a little, the Matter might eaſily have been done: And, accordingly *(c)*, ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors have been wiſe enough in putting together both the natural *Clearneſs* of *Moſes*'s Eyes, and the additional *Strength*, which God, at this Time, vouchſaf'd to give them; "For "God ſhew'd him, *ſay they*, the whole "Land, as in a *Garden-plat*; and gave his "Eyes ſuch Power of contemplating it, "from the Beginning to the End, that "he ſaw Hills and Dales, what was open, "and what was enclos'd, remote or nigh, "at one ſingle View, or Intuition."

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

His Offence, and why thought ſo criminal, as to exclude him from Canaan.

THE *Talmudiſts* have a very odd Conceit, that the great Sin, for which *Moſes* was hinder'd from going into the Land of *Canaan*, was, becauſe he call'd the People of God *(d) Rebels*; and from thence they have form'd a Maxim, that *he, who treats the Church, which ought to be honoured, with Contempt, is, as if he blaſphem'd the Name of God.* But, in Oppoſition to this, it ſhould be conſider'd, that *Moſes*, on this Occaſion, uſes the very ſame Language, that God himſelf does, when he bids him *(e) lay up the Rod of* Aaron, *as a Token againſt the Rebels*; and that, if this was the Thing, wherein he offended God, he not long after committed the ſame Thing (which he would hardly have done, conſidering already that it had coſt him ſo dear) when he told the People plainly, *(f) ye have been rebellious againſt the Lord, ever ſince I knew you.*

SEVERAL *Chriſtian*, as well as *Jewiſh* Expoſitors, think, that the Tranſgreſſion of *Moſes* lay in *ſmiting* the Rock, when his Inſtructions only were to *ſpeak to it*; and, for the Support of this they alledge, that God is an abſolute Sovereign, expecting an abſolute Obedience, and exacting Puniſhment even of his greateſt Favourites, when they pretend to vary from his Commands,

(c) Patrick's Commentary, on Deut. xxxiv.
(d) Numb. xx. 10.
(e) Ibid. chap. xvii. 10.
(f) Deut. ix. 24.

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mands, or to mix their own Conceptions with his Directions: And that there was ſome ſuch Prevarication in the Conduct of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, ſeems to be imply'd in God's Remonſtrance, which immediately follows; *(g) becauſe ye believed me not*, or (as it ſhould be tranſlated) becauſe *ye were not faithful to me, to* (ſanctify and) *glorify me in the Eyes of the Children of* Iſrael; *therefore ye ſhall not bring this Congregation into the Land which I have given them.*

It is granted indeed, that God order'd *Moſes* to take his Rod with him, and why ſhould he take it, unleſs it were to ſtrike the Rock, as he had done before? But the *Iſraelites* perhaps, began now to entertain a ſuperſtitious Fancy of the Virtue of this Rod, which had been the Inſtrument of ſo many Miracles wrought before them; and therefore God was minded to give *Moſes* an Opportunity of convincing them of their Folly, by making it appear, that neither himſelf, nor *Aaron*, nor the Rod, was of any Importance; that he alone was the Worker of Miracles, which he was able at any Time to do, by a Word's ſpeaking. This had been doing Juſtice to the Honour of God, but inſtead of this, *Moſes* ſpake and acted *(h) unadviſedly*, i. e. he ſpake and acted of himſelf, and what he had no Commiſſion to do, and thereby gave the *Iſraelites* an Opportunity to imagine, that the Supply of Water might come from him, from his Power and Ability to procure it. The Truth is, the Divine Writers, who have touch'd upon this Hiſtory, have made mention of two Defaults in *Moſes*, *viz.* his *Impatience*, and his *Infidelity*; and therefore we may ſuppoſe, that (the Water now ceaſing, at the Time, *(i)* when his Siſter *Miriam* dy'd) he was exceedingly troubled on both theſe Accounts; that, unexpectedly aſſaulted by the People, who ought to have paid him more Reverence, eſpecially in a Time of *Mourning*, he fell into a greater Commotion of Anger and Indignation, than was uſual in him; and that this Anger gave ſuch a Diſturbance to his Mind, and ſo diſorder'd his Thoughts, that when God bad him *take his Rod, and go, and ſpeak to the Rock*, he fell into ſome Doubt, whether the divine Goodneſs would grant the People the ſame Favour, he had done before; that thereupon he ſtruck the Rock with *Diffidence*, believing it improbable, that ſuch worthleſs and rebellious Wretches ſhould deſerve a Miracle; and that, the Water not iſſuing out at the firſt *Stroke*, his Diffidence increas'd into *Unbelief*, and a ſettled Perſuaſion, that they ſhould have none at all.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

There is one Conjecture more of a very learned *(k)* Man, which I ſhall but juſt mention, *viz.* that *Moſes* began to diſtruſt God's Promiſe of entering into the Land of *Canaan* at the End of forty Years, and to imagine, that, if he brought Water again out of the Rock, it muſt follow them, as long as the other had done, and engage them again in the like Wanderings; and therefore the Comment which he makes upon *Moſes*'s Words is this:—— "What, ye Rebels, muſt we bring Water "out of the Rock, as we did at *Horeb?* "Are all our Hopes and Expectations of "getting out of the Wilderneſs come to "this? We never fetch'd Water out of "the Rock but once, and that was, "becauſe we were to ſtay a long Time "in the Wilderneſs; and muſt we begin "our Abode here again, when we thought "we had attain'd to the End of our "Travels?" And, with that, he ſmote the Rock in a Paſſion *twice*, whereas God had commanded him only to *ſpeak* to *it*. But whichſoever of theſe Conjectures we are inclin'd to think moſt plauſible, there are few Writers, who are not diſpos'd to *extenuate* the Fault of *Moſes*, as not deſerving ſo ſevere a Puniſhment, had not God, in paſſing the Sentence of Excluſion upon him, conſider'd the Eminence and Dignity of a Perſon in his Station, in whom

(g) Numb. xx. 12. *(h)* Pſal. cvi. 33. *(i)* Numb. xx. 1. *(k)* *Lightfoot*'s Chronica Temp.

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whom a Tranſgreſſion of any Kind could not but be far more grievous and inexcuſable, than in an *ordinary* Man.

FOR this Reaſon we may obſerve, that, when *Moſes* has related the Wickedneſs and Puniſhment of *Zimri*, he takes Care to inform us (*l*) of his Family, his Titles, and his high Station in Life. He was the Prince of a Tribe, the Head of Thouſands in *Iſrael*, and one of the renown'd Men of the Congregation. In this Capacity he had a Right to be an Aſſeſſor with *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and the other Rulers, in the Government of the People; and, conſequently, could not regularly be brought under the Sentence of thoſe *Judges*, who were inferior to him. This he knew full well, and therefore, in Defiance of the Laws, and in Contempt of all Authority, (*m*) while *the Children of Iſrael were weeping before the Door of the Congregation in the Sight of* Moſes, *and in the Sight of all the People, he brought a* Midianitiſh *Woman into his Tent*. Moſes had order'd the (*n*) *Judges to ſlay every one his Men, that were join'd to* Baal-peor; *but we hear of none that were puniſhed for this Wickedneſs*, except this *Zimri*, and thoſe that afterwards died in the Plague: The Tranſgreſſion was become too univerſal to be corrected by a *Judiciary* Proceeding, and the Example of ſo leading a Man was enough to bear all down before it, and make the Infection ſpread. God had already order'd, that the Perſons, who committed this great Offence, ſhould (*o*) be puniſh'd in a very exemplary Manner: In Regard to God therefore, *Zimri* was under Sentence of Condemnation, and, as his Guilt was too glaring and notorious to need Conviction, and the Judges were found timorous and remiſs in the Execution of their Office, there was certainly wanting, on this important Occaſion, a proper Perſon to ſupply their Place.

NOW that the Act of *Phineas* in ſlaying *Zimri* was not the Effect of *Zeal*, and warm Reſentment only, but of a divine Impulſe and Inſtigation ſo to do, I think is evident from the Teſtimony of God himſelf, when he declares to *Moſes, that Phineas*, by the Death of *Zimri*, (*p*) *had made an Atonement for the Children of* Iſrael. For what Atonement could he pretend to make, unleſs God had appointed him? (*q*) *No Man taketh this Honour upon himſelf*, neither can any one perform this Office to good Purpoſe, *but he that is call'd of God, as was* Aaron. And therefore there is no Propriety in the Words, unleſs we ſuppoſe, that God order'd *Phineas* to make a *Propitiatory Sacrifice* of the Blood of the Offenders; and, for the Confirmation of this, we find God requiring of *Moſes* to *ſay* to the People, (*r*) *behold I give unto him my Covenant of Peace*; or (as it ſhould more truly be render'd) *behold it was I, who gave unto him my Covenant of Peace:* The Intent of which Declaration is to inform the Congregation, that *Phineas* had not done a raſh Action, out of his own mere Motion and Warmneſs of Heart, but that he had the immediate Direction and Appointment of God for what he did; that God had made a previous Covenant with him to that Purpoſe; and given him poſitive Aſſurance, that, upon the Death of *Zimri* and *Coſbi*, ſlain by his Hands, the Wickedneſs, that had been committed in the Camp, ſhould be forgiven. And therefore we find God eſpouſing the Deed, and, in a Kind of Exultation, declaring (*s*) *Phineas, the Son of* Eleazar *the Son of* Aaron, *the Prieſt, in being thus zealous for my Sake, hath turn'd away my Wrath from the Children of* Iſrael. In this View of the Fact all is clear; nor can this Example lay any Foundation for a dangerous Imitation, becauſe it will in no wiſe prove, that an illegal Action, tho' proceeding from a moſt upright Heart, *zealouſly affected* in a good Thing, is ever to be juſtified,

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

(*l*) Numb. xxv. 14. (*m*) Ver. 6. (*n*) Ver. 5. (*o*) Ver. 4. (*p*) Ver. 13
(*q*) Heb v. 4. (*r*) Numb. xxv. 12. (*s*) Ver. 11.

A. M. 2515, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

unleſs God, by an expreſs and well atteſted Revelation from Heaven, declares his Patronage and Acceptance of it.

In what Senſe the Iſraelites Raiments *waxed not old.*

The *Jews*, who love to magnify Miracles, ſometimes beyond their proper Bounds, have a current *Tradition*, that the Cloaths grew bigger, according as the Children themſelves increas'd in Bulk and Stature: But there is no Occaſion for any ſuch Suppoſition as this; ſince the Younger, in their proper Degrees, might ſucceed to the Veſtments of the Elder, and the Miracle ſtill remain wonderful enough, that God ſhould preſerve theſe Veſtments from decaying, or their Feet, by ſo long travelling in hot and ſtony Places, from *ſwelling*, or being *callous* (as ſome tranſlate it) for the Space of *forty Years*. Some indeed will have the Phraſe to denote, that their Feet were not ſenſible of any Uneaſineſs or Fatigue, through the whole vaſt Length of their Journey; but this Conſtruction is plainly repugnant *(t)* to the Scripture-Account we have of their Travels, and therefore the eaſier Interpretation will be, if, by Way of *Metonymy*, we take the *Shoe* for the *Foot*, and ſo make the latter agree with the former Part of the Verſe, and bring the whole to this Meaning, *viz.* "that, as, "their Cloaths, which cover'd the whole "Body, did not become uſeleſs through "Age; ſo neither did their Shoes decay, "or burſt, or grow out of Shape, (for "in all theſe Senſes may the original "Word be taken) though they were en-"gag'd in ſo tedious a March".

It is to be obſerv'd however, that the *Hebrews* wanted neither Flocks nor Herds in the Wilderneſs; and the Hangings, and other Works belonging to the *Tabernacle*, ſufficiently ſhew, that they were no Strangers to the Art of Weaving. But, ſuppoſing they did not manufacture their own Cloaths, they might however purchaſe them from the *Arabians*, and other neighbouring Nations, and could therefore be under no Want of a ſufficient Supply of this Kind of Neceſſaries. And from theſe Conſiderations *(u)* a learned Commentator concludes, that the Senſe of the Words, *thy Raiment waxed not old upon thee*, muſt be —— That, in the Deſarts of *Arabia*, the *Iſraelites* had ſo great a Plenty of Cloaths, and ſo many Changes of Raiment, that they were under no more Neceſſity to wear them tatter'd, or thread-bare, than if they had liv'd in one of the moſt plentiful, rich, and Cloth-working Countries. *And thy Feet did not ſwell*, or grow *callous*, as poor People's Feet are wont to do, when the Soles of their Shoes are worn out, and they forc'd to tread upon the hard Ground; for ſo it is explain'd in another Place, *(x) thy Shoe did not wax old upon thy Foot*, i. e. thy Poverty did not oblige thee to wear thy Shoes (as poor People do) 'till they were old, and grown ſo very thin, that, in hard and ſtony Ways, they hurt thy Feet, and made them *ſwell*. Poverty, we know, neceſſarily occaſions a Meanneſs of Apparel, but Men of large Fortunes have a Variety of Suits, and commonly caſt their Cloaths off, before they are too far worn: And, in like Manner, the *Hiſtorian*'s Deſign is (in this Inſtance of Raiment) to ſignify to us, that the *Iſraelites*, while they abode in a barren Wilderneſs, liv'd like Men of Affluence; *(y) for the Lord their God was with them* (as he tells us elſewhere) *and they lacked Nothing*.

From Numb. xxii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

The Meaning of God's ſeeing no Iniquity in Jacob.

But how well ſoever God might provide for the *Iſraelites in this*, and all other Inſtances of his *paternal* Care, yet, we cannot think, with ſome *Predeſtinarians*, that, like an over-fond Parent, he was blind to their Faults. The Word *Aven*, which we tranſlate *Iniquity*, and the Word *Amal*, which we render *Perverſeneſs*, do both very frequently ſignify in Scripture the higheſt Kind of Wickedneſs, *i. e. Idolatry*; and ſo the Reaſon, which *Balaam* aſſigns, why God had *bleſs'd* the *Iſraelites*, and would not *curſe* them, is, that they had not as yet incurr'd the Sin of *Idolatry*.

(t) Vid. Deut. viii. 4. and xxix. 5. *(u)* *Le Clerc*'s Comment. in Deut. viii. 4. *(x)* Deut. xxix. 5. *(y)* Deut. ii. 7.

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Idolatry. Some private Men might perhaps be guilty of it, but it was not yet become *National*, and *Epidemical*; nor were there any Hopes, that God would ever deliver them into the Power of their Enemies, unleſs, ſome Way or other, they ſhould be ſeduc'd into that Sin; and therefore *Balaam advis'd* the Princes of *Moab*, by the Allurements of ſome beautiful Women, to entice them into it, as the likelieſt Way to deprive them of the divine Protection.

OTHERS take the Words in a common Senſe, to denote *Sin*, or *Wickedneſs* in general; but then, by the Words *ſee*, or *behold*, they underſtand ſuch an Obſervation of this Wickedneſs, as marks it out for Puniſhment. According to this Obſervation, they make the Meaning of the Phraſe to be, that, " tho' the *Iſraelites* " were confeſſedly guilty of many great " Crimes, yet, ſince they were not *uni-* " *verſally* ſo, God wou'd have more Re- " gard to his own Promiſes, than to the " Sins of ſome Particulars; becauſe he " is a God of perfect Veracity, and the " Unbelief and Impiety of *ill* Men ſhall " not have Force enough with him, to " recal and annul his Promiſes to the " *Good*."

THERE is another Signification of the Word, which we render *behold*, and that is, to *look upon with Pleaſure and Approbation*: And *(z)* therefore, as the Particle *Beth* does frequently ſignify *againſt*, as well as *in*, (and *(a)* ſo occurs in ſeveral Parts of Scripture) the Senſe of the Words will naturally run thus, *God does not approve of any wicked Deſigns, or Practices againſt* Jacob; for the Words, which we render *Iniquity* and *Perverſeneſs*, do equally ſignify *Outrage* or *Oppreſſion*, *Deceit*, or Machinations of any Kind, which God declares he would not ſuffer to be attempted againſt his People. And therefore *Balaam*, upon a Review of the many Bleſſings and Deliverances, which God had vouchſaf'd them, breaks out into this Reflection, and therewith concludes his *prophetick* Speech: *(b) Behold the People ſhall riſe up as a great Lion, and lift up himſelf as a young Lion; he ſhall not lie down until he eat of the Prey, and drink of the Blood.*

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

THUS, in what Senſe ſoever we take the Words, whether as relating to *Idolatry*, of which the *Iſraelites*, in the main, were not at that Time guilty; or to *Wickedneſs* in general, which God's Promiſes to the Forefathers reſtrain'd him from puniſhing, tho' they might be guilty; or to the evil Deſigns and Practices againſt his People, which his Juſtice and Goodneſs both oblig'd him to diſapprove; we ſhall have no Reaſon to accuſe him of a blind Partiality towards them, but much, very much, to cry out with the inſpir'd Writers, *(c) Righteous art thou, O Lord, and true is thy Judgment*; *(d) with the Holy, thou ſhalt be holy*; *and with the upright Man thou ſhalt be perfect*; for the *Lord knoweth who are his, and* can rightly diſtinguiſh *between thoſe that ſerve him, and thoſe that ſerve him not.*

Balaam's *Character, and that he was a* real *Prophet.*

OF the Number of *thoſe, who ſerved not God, Balaam* was certainly one; and yet we have Reaſon to preſume, that he nevertheleſs was a *real* Prophet. The *Jews* indeed are generally of Opinion, that he was a buſy and pretending *Aſtrologer*, who, obſerving when Men were under a bad Aſpect of the Stars, pronounc'd a Curſe upon them; which ſometimes coming to paſs gain'd him, in ſome neighbouring Nations, a Reputation in his Way. Several of the antient Fathers ſuppoſe him to be no more, than a common Soothſayer, (for ſo he *(e)* is call'd) who undertook to foretel future Events, and diſcover Secrets, *&c.* but by no good and juſtifiable Arts. *Origen* will needs have it, that he was no *Prophet*, but only one of the *Devil*'s Sorcerers; and that of him he went to enquire, but God was pleas'd to prevent

(z) An Eſſay towards a new Verſion of the Scripture 1—xxiii. 23, *& alibi.* *(b)* Numb. xxiii. 24. *(c)* Pſal. cxix. 137. *(d)* Pſal. xviii. 25. *(e)* Numb. xxii. 5. and Joſh. xiii. 22. *(a)* Vid. Exod. xiv. 25.—xx. 16. Numb. xii.

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prevent him, and * to put what Anſwers he pleas'd into his Mouth. It cannot be deny'd however, but that *(f)* the Scripture expreſsly calls him a *Prophet*; and therefore ſome later Writers have imagin'd, that he had been once a good Man, and a true Prophet, till, *loving the Wages of Iniquity*, and proſtituting the Honour of his Office to Covetouſneſs, he apoſtatiz'd from God, and, betaking himſelf to *idolatrous* Practices, fell under the Deluſion of the *Devil*, of whom he learnt all his *magical Enchantments*; tho', at this Juncture, when the Preſervation of his People was concern'd, it might conſiſt with God's Wiſdom to appear to him, and vouchſafe his Revelations.

BALAAM indeed was a Man of no great Probity, and might by Profeſſion be a *Diviner*; but, by the free Acceſs he had to God, it ſeems to be apparent, that he was no common *Sorcerer*, or Prophet of the Devil: For did ever any Sorcerer addreſs his Prayers to the Supreme God, and receive Anſwers and Inſtructions from him? Did ever any Sorcerer preſcribe a Law to himſelf, *to ſay nothing, leſs or more*, than what the Spirit of God ſhould dictate? The Spirit of God, when did it ever *come upon an Enchanter?* Or was it ever known, that an Oracle, upon a remote Event, and what God alone was capable of revealing, ſhould be declar'd by a mere *Magician?*

When God was pleas'd to give Anſwers to his Enquiries, to make his Angel appear to him, and, to put the Word of *Prophecy* in his Mouth, on all theſe Occaſions, we find him expreſſing no Surprize at all, as if he had been perfectly well acquainted with theſe ſeveral Ways of divine Communication; and therefore, bad as he was, and a Slave to his Paſſions, he muſt nevertheleſs be deem'd a true Prophet of God. The only ſuſpicious Paſſage in his Conduct, is, his having Recourſe to *Enchantments*; for *(g) what Concord hath God with Belial?* Or what Service could he poſſibly promiſe himſelf by making Uſe of theſe? But to this it may be reply'd, that *(h)* the Arts of *Magicians*, and their Incantations to procure Oracles, and Prodigies, were, by the greateſt Philoſophers of theſe Times, held in great Veneration, and by them reputed to be true. Tho' therefore this *Balaam* was really a Prophet, yet, as a Man of Learning, he might not be a Stranger to the *Theory* of what human Science and the then reputed natural Knowledge had advanc'd upon theſe Subjects: And as *Saul*, tho' he had before *(i) put away thoſe that had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards out of the Land*; was yet induc'd, *when the Lord anſwered him not, neither by Dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets, to go to a Woman, that had a familiar Spirit, and inquire of her*; ſo *Balaam*, finding nothing but a full Diſappointment in all his Views, in the ſeveral Revelations, which God was pleas'd to make to him, and being warmly inclin'd to purchaſe (if he might with any Colour be able to do it) the Advancement, which *Balak* had offer'd him, was tempted to try what might be the Event, if he us'd ſome of the Arts, which moſt learned Nations held in the higheſt Repute, and eſteem'd to be of the greateſt Efficacy: He try'd but *found (k) no Enchantment againſt* Jacob, *nor any Divination againſt* Iſrael.

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To enter therefore into the Character of this true *Prophet* and *Inchanter* both, we muſt obſerve, 1ſt, That before the Giving of

The Origin of his Character and Behaviour accounted for.

* To this Purpoſe *Philo*, in his Life of *Moſes*, brings in an Angel diſcourſing with *Balaam* to this Effect: "It "will be in vain for you to contend, for I, without your Privity or Knowledge, will guide the *Organs* of your "Mouth, and make you ſpeak what upon this Occaſion is fit and proper. I will direct your Speech and cauſe you "to utter Prophecies, tho' you know nothing of the Matter." Several Paſſages to the ſame Purpoſe are likewiſe to be found in *Joſephus*, (Antiq. Lib. iv. c. 7.) though there is no Foundation for them in what *Moſes* tells us concerning theſe Adventures of *Balaam*.

(*f*) 2 Pet. ii. 16. (*g*) 2 Cor. vi. 15. (*h*) *Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii. (*i*) 1 Sam. xxviii. 3, &c. (*k*) Numb. xxiii. 23.

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of the Law, and the Conqueſt of the promis'd Land, there were other † true Worſhippers of God, beſides the Deſcendants of *Abraham*, diſpers'd over the Face of the Earth. 2dly, That this Worſhip of God † was frequently mix'd with Superſtition and Idolatry, even among them, who profeſs'd to adore that one God of Heaven and Earth. 3dly, That this odious Mixture did not hinder God † from revealing himſelf to thoſe, who practis'd ſuch a monſtrous and motly Religion. 4thly, That *ſupernatural* Gifts in general, and thoſe of *Prophecy* in *particular*, tho' they enlighten the Minds of the Prophets, yet, * many Times, did not ſanctify their Hearts and Affections. And, 5thly, That the greateſt Weakneſs or Wickedneſs of Prophets never went ſo far, as to make them pronounce Oracles, contrary to what was dictated to them by the Spirit of God: *(l) If* Balak *would give me his Houſe full of Silver and Gold, I cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord, to do either good or bad of my own Mind, but what the Lord ſaith, that muſt I ſpeak.*

IT is not to be queſtion'd therefore, but that *Balaam* was conſcious of his own Inſpiration, and did *knowingly* obey the divine Will; but ſtill he could have wiſh'd, for *Balak*'s Sake, as well as his own, that he might have been permitted to pronounce different Things, to what he did; even as the Prophets of *Iſrael*, in future Ages, when order'd to denounce Judgments againſt the People, would have deſired Liberty, no doubt, to propheſy Things of a more grateful Reliſh; but as they could not have that Permiſſion, they obey'd, (tho' with ſome Reluctancy) and when they came to the Point, did nevertheleſs pronounce boldly what they were order'd to promulge.

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AND this, by the Way, will, in ſome Meaſure, account for the odd Mixture in *Balaam*'s Behaviour, *viz.* his ſeeking for *Enchantments* in one Minute, and falling into a *Fit of Devotion*, in the next. For beſides that the Words, which he utters upon this Occaſion, are not properly his own, but infus'd into him by the Spirit of God, and for which, conſequently, he is not reſponſible; to hear a wicked Man ſometimes come out with a pious *Wiſh*, or holy *Ejaculation*, can be no incongruous Thing at all. *(m)* The Character of Virtue is ſo very beautiful, its End is ſo comfortable, and the Odour of its Memory ſo ſweet, that even wicked Men cannot ſee and hear it, without ſecretly preferring it, and inwardly ſighing for it, and wiſhing at leaſt that it were their own: And therefore it is no Wonder, that even *Balaam*, under ſome ſudden Compunction of Mind, or Conviction of the Amiableneſs and happy Eſtate of Virtue, both here and hereafter, ſhould deſire to *die the righteous Man's Death*. But there is ſomething more to be ſaid for *Balaam* in this Reſpect, than for other wicked Men; and that is, the Buſineſs he was now about. The whole Series of his Behaviour indeed ſhews him to be a vain, oſtentatious Man. By the Preamble to his Propheſies, *(n)* Balaam, *the Son of* Beor, *hath ſaid, and the Man whoſe Eyes are open, who knew the Knowledge of the Moſt High, and ſaw the Viſion of the Almighty, hath ſaid*, &c. he would make us believe, that he was a Man of no ſmall Conſideration, vaſtly familiar with God, and * quite ſuperior to the little Pretenders of his Age; and, as we may farther obſerve, that, in

† Thus *Job* and his Friends dwelt in *Arabia*; *Jethro* and his Poſterity, in the Country of *Midian*; and *Abraham*'s Abode in *Meſopotamia* (where *Balaam* liv'd) might leave behind him ſome *Proſelytes* to the true Religion.

† The *Teraphim* of *Laban* proves this.

† *Abimelech*, and *Nebuchadnezzar* are Inſtances of this, *Gen.* xxvi. and *Dan.* ii. 1.

* For ſo we read, *the Heads of God's People judge for Reward, and the Prieſts thereof teach for Hire*, and *the Prophets thereof divine for Money*, Mic. iii. 11.

(*l*) Numb. xxii. 38. (*m*) *Young*'s Sermons, Vol. II. (*n*) Numb. xxiv. 15, 16.

* The *Jeruſalem Targum* paraphraſes *Balaam*'s Words in a Manner, that ſhews his Oſtentatiouſneſs: *The Man ſaid, who was honoured above his Brethren, to whom that was revealed, which was hidden from all the Prophets.* Patrick's Commentary, on *Numb.* xxiv. 3.

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all his Intercourſe with *Balak*, he never pretended to conſult any but God, we cannot but think, that, to ſeem to be in earneſt about the Matter, and now and then drop a *religious* Sentence, was no more, than what became the Buſineſs he was upon, and the Character he thought proper to aſſume, even ſuppoſing the Words to have been of his own Invention, which (as we ſaid before) were of divine Inſpiration.

The Application of his famous Prophecy.

Of all the Prophecies, which God at this Time deliver'd from the Mouth of *Balaam*, there is one of a more eminent and peculiar Nature: *(o) I ſhall ſee him, but not now; I ſhall behold him, but not nigh: There ſhall come a Star out of* Jacob, *and a Sceptre ſhall ariſe out of* Iſrael, *and ſhall ſmite the Corners of* Moab, *and deſtroy all the Children of* Seth. All Opinions agree in this, that *Balaam* here ſpeaks of a King and Conqueror; and perhaps, in calling him a *Star*, he accommodates himſelf to the long-eſtabliſh'd Notion, * that the Appearance of *Comets* denoted, either the Exaltation, or Deſtruction of Kingdoms: But the great Queſtion is, of what King or Conqueror is it that he ſpeaks?

(p) Some have apply'd the Prophecy entirely to *David*, the moſt illuſtrious of the *Jewiſh* Monarchs, who extended his Conqueſts far and wide. *(q)* Others have apply'd it as entirely to the *Meſſiah*, ſuppoſing that the Metaphor of a *Star* comports better with him, and his celeſtial *Origin*, than with *David*; and that the main Strokes of the Prophecy reſemble an *heavenly*, more than an *earthly* Conqueror. The Matter however may be compromis'd, if we will but allow *(r)* of a learned Man's Obſervation, *viz.* that the moſt remarkable Prophecies in the Old Teſtament bear uſually a twofold Senſe; one relating to the Times before the *Meſſiah*, and the other, either fulfill'd in the Perſon of the *Meſſiah*, or in the Members of his Body, the Church, of which Kind we may juſtly eſteem the preceding Prophecy. For tho' its primary Aſpect may be towards *David*, yet whoever conſiders it attentively ſhall perceive, that its Ideas are too full to extend no farther, and muſt therefore, in a *ſecondary*, and more exalted Senſe, refer us to Chriſt, *whoſe Kingdom ruleth over all*, and *to whom all Things are put in Subjection under his Feet.*

From Numb. xviii to the End of Deuteronomy.

In this Senſe the generality of *Jews*, as well as *Chriſtians*, have all along underſtood it; and 'tis no improbable Conjecture (* whatever ſome may think of it) that by the Strength of this Prophecy, kept upon Record among the *Oriental Archives*, the *Magi* of that Country, at our Saviour's Nativity, were directed to *Jeruſalem*, and enquir'd, *(s) where is the King of the* Jews, *for we have ſeen his Star in the Eaſt?* And, upon a farther Suppoſition, that theſe very *Magi* were deſcended from *Balaam* in a direct Line, he might then, with Propriety enough, pronounce of the *Meſſiah*, *I ſhall ſee him*, i. e. *ſee him* in my Poſterity, *but not now*; I ſhall *behold him*, *but not near.*

And that of Moſes.

The Promiſe, or Prediction, which God orders *Moſes* to make to the *Iſraelites*, is this, *(t) I will raiſe them up a Prophet, from among their Brethren, like unto*

(o) Numb. xxiv. 17.

* *Juſtin*, in his Hiſtory, ſpeaking of *Mithridates*, tells us, that in the ſeveral Years of his *Birth*, and *Acceſſion* to his Kingdom, a *Comet* ſhone with ſuch a Luſtre, as if the whole Heavens had been a-fire. Lib. xxxvii. c. 2. *Lucan*, in the Deſcription which he gives us of the *Civil* Wars of *Rome*, among the ſeveral Prodigies, which were ſeen both on Earth and in Heaven, reckons up this: ——

——————Crinemque timendi
Syderis, & Terris mutantem Regna Cometem. Lib. i.

And *Diodorus Siculus* delivers it, as a Doctrine current among the *Chaldeans*, that the Riſing of *Comets* is either beneficial or hurtful, not only to Nations and States, but even to Kings themſelves, and ſometimes to private Perſons. Lib. ii. p. 116.

(p) *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, on Numb. xxiv. *(q)* *Patrick*'s Commentary, ibid. *(r)* *Grotius*, in Matt. i. 22.

* *Witſius* in his Miſcel. Sacra, Lib. i. c. 16. ſeems to explode this Conjecture of *Origen*'s, but not upon ſufficient Grounds.

(s) Matt. ii. 2. *(t)* Deut. xviii. 18.

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unto thee, and will put my Words in his Mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I command him. Now, in order to diſcover, wherein the Similitude between *Moſes* and this Prophet was to conſiſt, we muſt enquire into the Particulars, that diſtinguiſh'd *Moſes* from the reſt of the Prophets; and, accordingly, we find God himſelf, upon a ſmall Sedition, that *Aaron* and his Siſter were engag'd in and againſt him, making this Declaration in his Favour; *(u) If there be a Prophet among you, I the Lord will make myſelf known unto him in a Viſion, and will ſpeak unto him in a Dream; but my Servant* Moſes *is not ſo, who is faithful in all his Houſe, with him will I ſpeak Mouth to Mouth, very apparently, and not in dark Speeches:* And what he means by ſpeaking *apparently*, we find explain'd, when we are told, *that (x) the Lord ſpake to* Moſes *Face to Face, as a Man ſpeaketh to his Friend.* This was the diſtinguiſhing Character of *Moſes*, and in this Particular neither *Joſhua*, nor any of the ſucceeding Prophets could pretend to *be like unto him.* They never ſaw God's glorious Preſence, nor heard him ſpeak diſtinctly. He did not converſe familiarly with them, but whatever he had to communicate, he did it by Way of Viſions, or Dreams, or ſome dark and *enigmatical* Expreſſions.

(y) THEY indeed had no ſpecial Commiſſion, no new Inſtitutes of Religion to publiſh, nor had they uſually any extraordinary Credentials to produce. Their Buſineſs, in ſhort, was to explain and inculcate the Laws, which *Moſes* gave, and even in this it is hardly ſuppoſable, that they were always infallibly directed, becauſe it is ſaid of ſeveral of them, that, *(z) they erred in Viſion, and ſtumbled in Judgment.* So that with no Propriety can it be affirm'd of them that *they were like* Moſes, much leſs can that additional Character belong to them, *I will put my Words in his Mouth, and he ſhall ſpeak unto them all that I ſhall command him,* which certainly implies an extraordinary Commiſſion to publiſh ſomething, that was not reveal'd before.

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BUT now, when it is ſaid of the bleſſed *Jeſus*, that he was *(a) a Teacher ſent from God*, for that *no Man could do the Miracles*, which he did, *except God were with him*; that he came *(b)* to *declare God*, or (what is all one) to reveal a new Religion, *(c) which was confirmed by Signs, and mighty Wonders*; and, to qualify him for this, that he *(d) was from the Beginning with God*, and *(e) is in the Boſom of the Father:* When it is expreſly ſaid, that he is *(f) the Mediator of a new Covenant in his Blood, for the Redemption of the Tranſgreſſions of the former Covenant*; and *(g) as* Moſes *was faithful in all his Houſe, as a Servant, for a Teſtimony of thoſe Things which were to be ſpoken after; ſo he, as a Son, was faithful to him, that appointed him, and was counted worthy of more Glory, than* Moſes, *in as much as he, who hath built the Houſe, hath more Honour, than the Houſe.* When all this, I ſay, is affirm'd, and verify'd of Chriſt, it is manifeſt, that the great Lines of the *prophetical* Deſcription, we are now conſidering in their true and *primary* Senſe, meet only in him, who is the *expreſs Image of his Father, (h)* in *whom are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge.* But to return to *Balaam.*

Balak's *Deſign in ſending for* Balaam.

WHATEVER Opinion we may have of the Matter, 'tis certain, that ſome of the wiſeſt Nations among the *Heathens* had a great Conception of the Powers of their Prophets, and thought that they were Perſons in high Favour and Eſteem with their Gods, who were always inclineable to liſten to, and ratify either their *Benedictions* or *Execrations.* * The *Imprecations* of theſe Men (as *(i) Plutarch* informs

(u) Numb. xii. 6, &c. *(x)* Exod. xxxiii. 11. *(y) Sykes*'s Eſſay upon the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion. *(z)* Iſa. xxviii. 7. *(a)* John iii. 2. *(b)* John i. 18. *(c)* Acts ii. 22. *(d)* John i. 2. *(e)* Ver. 18. *(f)* Heb. viii. 6. *(g)* Heb. iii. 2, &c. *(h)* Col. ii. 3. *(i)* In Vita *Craſſi*, p. 553.

* The *Romans* were of Opinion, that, by a certain Form of *Imprecation*, they could demoliſh Towns, and defeat whole Armies of their Enemies; and what the uſual Form for this Purpoſe was, *Macrobius* has taken care to leave us in

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informs us) were by the *Romans* held ſo very efficacious, that whoever was under them, could not poſſibly eſcape; and therefore we need not wonder, that, in Conformity to this Cuſtom, we find *Balak* ſending for *Balaam to come and curſe the* Iſraelites for him, ſince it was his ſettled Perſuaſion, *(k) that he whom he bleſſed, was bleſſed, and he whom he curſed, was curſed.*

Balaam's *Wickedneſs; God's Anger at him, but Wiſdom in permitting him to go.*

But, tho' *Balak* acted according to the prevailing Prejudices of that Age in ſending for *Balaam*, yet God had ſufficient Reaſon to be angry with him for going. He had once conſulted God about *curſing* the People of *Iſrael*, and had receiv'd a very full and peremptory Anſwer forbidding him to go about it; *Thou ſhalt not curſe the People, for they are bleſſed.* This Reaſon however he kept to himſelf; for had he communicated it to the *Ambaſſadors* at firſt, in all Probability, they would not have importun'd him anew to go: But his Covetouſneſs urg'd him on, and the rich Preſents and Promiſes, which the Meſſengers the ſecond Time brought, began to operate ſo very powerfully, that he forgot his Reverence to the divine Majeſty, and preſum'd once more to conſult him about going.

Upon this Occaſion the *ſacred* Hiſtorian relates the Matter thus,——*(l) And God came unto* Balaam *at Night, and ſaid unto him, If the Men come to call thee, riſe up and go with them: And* Balaam *roſe up in the Morning, and ſaddled his Aſs, and went with the Princes of* Moab, *and God's Anger was kindled becauſe he went.* What, angry for what himſelf commanded him to do? *(m)* Our *Tranſlators* indeed thus render the Text, but the *Hebrew* Words are clear of this Abſurdity; for they tell us, that God's *Anger was kindled*, not *ci halak, becauſe he went*, but *ci halak hua* becauſe *he went of himſelf*, i. e. without ſtaying for *Balak*'s Meſſengers to come in the Morning to call him. He had told them over Night, that an *Houſe full of Silver and Gold* could not tempt him to go counter to what God ſhould direct him to do; and by this vaunting Speech they very poſſibly might think their Maſter's Offers neglected, and be tempted to go away next Morning without him; but ſo full were his Head and Heart of Expectations from the Journey, that he would not run the Hazard of their calling; but roſe up early in the Morning, went himſelf to them, which was acting directly contrary to God's expreſs Order, for which Reaſon he ſent his *Angel to ſtand in his Way for an Adverſary againſt him.* By the Mouth of his Angel however, God permitted him to go, as knowing very well that his Journey would tend to his Confuſion, and the Manifeſtation of his People's Glory. For, though there was nothing but Malice in the Prophet's Heart, and a fix'd Determination to do all the Harm he could to the *Iſraelites*; yet God, by his *over-ruling* Providence, directed his Words ſo, as to make them, upon every Eſſay to *curſe*, pregnant with Bleſſings. Had not God forbidden the Prophet to go upon his firſt Application for Leave, he had not declar'd his Averſion to *Balak*'s wicked Project: Had he not allow'd him to go upon his farther Importunity, he had not expos'd his Folly and *Madneſs*, as well as the Weakneſs of his magical Arts, ſo effectually: But now, in the wiſe Method which

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in theſe Words: *Dis Pater, ſive Jovis mavis, ſive quo alio Nomine fas eſt nominare; ut omnem illam Urbem, Exercitumque, quem ego me ſentio dicere, Fugâ, Formidine, Terrore, Compleatis; quique, adverſus Legiones, Exercitumque noſtrum, Arma, Telaque ferunt, uti vos eos Exercitus, eos Hoſtes, eoſque Homines, Urbes, Agroſque eorum, & qui in illis Locis, Regionibus, Agris, Urbibuſque habitant, abducatis, Lumine ſupremo privetis: Exercitibuſque Hoſtium, Urbes, Agreſque eorum, quos me ſentio dicere, uti vos eas Urbes, Agroſque, Capita, Ætateſque eorum Devotas, Conſecrataſque habeatis, illis Legibus, quibus quandoque ſunt maximè Hoſtes devoti: Eoſque ego Vicarios, pro me, Fide, Magiſtratuque meo, & Populo Romano, Exercitibus, Legionibuſque noſtris, do, devoveo, ut me, meamque Fidem, Imperiumque, Legiones, Exercitumque noſtrum, qui in his Rebus gerundis ſunt, bene ſalvos ſinatis eſſe. Si hæc ita faxitis, ut ego ſciam, ſentiam, intelligamque, tum quiſquis votum hoc faxit, rectè factum eſto, Ovibus atris tribus, Tellus Mater, Teque, Jupiter, obteſtor.* Saturn. l. iii. c. 9.

(k) Numb. xxii. 6. *(l)* Numb. xxii. 20, &c. *(m) Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. III. lib. xii.

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which he took, he defeated the Deſigns of the Wicked, and *made the Wrath of Man to praiſe him*; he hath ſhewn us, that no *Enchantments*, no Machinations can prevail, where he undertakes to protect; and *(n)* has left us this Leſſon of Inſtruction; "that when Men are fooliſh "and ſelf-willed, and, in the Purſuit of "their corrupt Views, will follow their "own Ways, notwithſtanding many "kind Hints and Admonitions to the "contrary; God then abandons them "to their own Imaginations, which, in "the Event, very frequently prove their "Ruin."

How God might make Balaam's *Aſs ſpeak.*

IT cannot be deny'd indeed but that God gave *Balaam* ſundry Admonitions, not to follow, in this head-ſtrong Manner, the Purſuit of his Avarice. His enjoining him not to go, when the Princes of *Moab* firſt came for him; his ſending an Angel in the Road to rebuke him for his raſh and unadvis'd Proceeding; and, when he was come to *Balak*, his over-ruling his Words upon three different Attempts, and making him pronounce what was leaſt of all his Intention, were ſufficient Remembrancers, that *his Way* could not poſſibly be *right before God*. But of all others, the ſpeaking of his Aſs was ſuch a miraculous *Incident*, as would have made any conſidering Man, one would think, retract his Purpoſe.

THIS indeed is ſo wonderful an Inſtance, that ſeveral of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, who, upon other Occaſions, are fond enough of Miracles, ſeem as if they would hardly be induc'd to aſſent to this. *Philo*, in his Life of *Moſes*, paſſes it over in Silence; and *(o) Maimonides* pretends, that it only happen'd to *Balaam* in a *prophetick Viſion*. An inſpir'd Writer in the *New Teſtament* aſſures us, that it was real Fact, as *Moſes* relates it. *Moſes* ſays, that *the Lord open'd the Mouth of the Aſs, and ſhe ſaid unto* Balaam; and St *Peter* tells us, that the *Aſs ſpeaking with Man's Voice, forbad the Madneſs of the Prophet*; an human Voice came out of the Mouth of the Aſs, but I do not apprehend, that this Voice proceeded from her own Sentiments. Her Tongue was miraculouſly mov'd, not by any Power of her's, ſo to move it, and it ſpake what it was mov'd to utter, without any Connection of her Words and Sentiments, and without her underſtanding the very Words ſhe utter'd upon this Occaſion. This ſeems to have been the Fact, and the ſevereſt Philoſophy, I hope, cannot deny, that God is as able to make Creatures, deſtitute of Underſtanding, pronounce articulate and *rational* Words, as it is for a *Muſician*, by the different Touches, he gives any Inſtrument, to make it expreſs a Variety of Notes.

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Why Balaam *might not be aſtoniſh'd at it.*

IT may ſeem a little ſtrange indeed, that *Balaam* ſhould ſhew no Kind of Surprize, when he heard his Aſs ſpeak like an human Creature: But to this *(p)* ſome reply, That *Balaam* might probably have imbibed the Doctrine of *Tranſmigration of Souls*, (which was certainly very common in the *Eaſt*) and from thence might be leſs aſtoniſh'd to hear any Brute ſpeak; whereas *(q)* others ſuppoſe, that he was in ſuch a Rage and Fury at the ſuppos'd Perverſeneſs of his Beaſt *cruſhing his Foot*, and *falling down under him*, that, for the preſent, he could think of nothing elſe; tho' the Conciſeneſs of *Moſes*'s Narration, that muſt be preſum'd to have omitted many Circumſtances, which, if rightly known, would diſpel *this*, and many more Difficulties, that may be imagin'd in this Tranſaction, does certainly furniſh us with a better and more ſatisfactory Anſwer. For, *(r)* tho' we could not aſſign a ſufficient Reaſon, why God thought fit to work this Miracle, yet who ſhall therefore dare to infer that it was never wrought? The Account, which we have here even of the moſt ancient Times, is very ſhort; nor can we rightly form a Judgment what the prevailing Sentiments of the World might be, in the Age, when *Balaam* liv'd. The Counſels

(*n*) Scripture Vindicated, Part II.
(*o*) More Nevoch. Part II. c. 24.
(*p*) Vid. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.
(*b*) Vid. *Patrick*'s Commentary in Locum.
(*r*) *Le Clerc*'s Commentary in Numb. xxiii.

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of God are likewiſe a *great Deep*, nor can any Man ſo far penetrate into them, as to pronounce what is proper or improper for him to do. Upon this Occaſion, however, there ſeems to be ſome Reaſon for his giving the Aſs the Faculty of Speech, *viz.* that thereby he might convince the Princes of *Moab*, (who are ſuppos'd to be in Company with *Balaam)* how eaſy a Thing it was for him, who had *open'd the Mouth* of this dumb Creature, to ſtop *that* of its Owner, or to direct his Words to what Purpoſes he pleas'd; and (*s*) how weak and impotent was the Man, in whom they confided, when, with all his Curſes and Imprecations, he could not get the better of a poor Brute, and much leſs then of the People, ſo immediately under the divine Protection.

How Balaam *came to be ſlain among the* Midianites.

The Scripture indeed informs us, that, after his fruitleſs Negotiation with *Balak*, (*t*) *he returned to his own Place:* And ſo he might return to *Meſopotamia*, and yet, when he heard of the Succeſs of his Advice againſt the *Iſraelites*, and how many Thouſands of them had been cut off in Conſequence of it, he might go back again to the *Midianites*, in Hopes of obtaining an ample Reward for his Services; or when War was declar'd againſt them, the *Midianites* themſelves might poſſibly ſend for him again, and he be the rather inclin'd to go, becauſe now he might have ſome Hopes of curſing the *Iſraelites* with Succeſs, ſince they had apoſtatiz'd from the Worſhip of their God, and fallen into Idolatry, which while they ſtood clear of, he knew he could not be permitted to do; and 'tis not unlikely, that for this Purpoſe he was carry'd into the Field of Battle, and there became a Sacrifice to his own evil Policy.

In what Senſe God is ſaid to ſwear.

It is a ſad Perverſion of the Senſe of Scripture, when God, in Condeſcenſion to our Capacities, is pleas'd to make uſe of human Words and Phraſes, to account that Condeſcenſion, not only an Impropriety of Speech, but a Diſparagement likewiſe to the divine Nature and Perfections. The Scripture indeed makes mention of God's *ſwearing in his Wrath*; but who would ever think, that the Form of this Expreſſion ſhould give any Diſguſt, or (*u*) the Senſe of it be thought repugnant to the *natural* Notions we have of God? He that at all conſiders the End and Intent of an Oath, muſt allow it to be a ſolemn *Aſſeveration*, made as ſtrong and binding as poſſible, in order to beget Faith and Confidence in others, or to procure a ſure Belief of what is ſo affirm'd. When Men ſwear, nothing can make their Aſſeveration ſo ſtrong and binding, as the Invocation of God to be their Witneſs, or Avenger: And, in like Manner, when God himſelf is ſaid to *ſwear*, we are to ſuppoſe, that he enforces and ſtrengthens his *Aſſeveration* as much as poſſible, or as much as is proper to beget the higheſt Truth and Confidence in his Revelations, not by invoking a *Superior*, (for that, we may ſay, is not in his Power) but by condeſcending to make uſe of human Forms of Swearing, with ſuch proper Alterations as the Caſe requires. Thus, when God ſwears (*x*) by himſelf, or (*y*) by his great Name, or (*z*) by his Life, or (*a*) by his Right-Hand, or (*b*) by his Holineſs, or (*c*) his Truth, or (*d*) his Excellency, or any other of his Attributes or Perfections, the Meaning of theſe Expreſſions is much the ſame, *viz.* that he thereby declares the Thing to be as *certain*, and as ſurely to be depended on, as his own Being or Attributes are. This, I ſay, is the whole Purport of the Thing; and God is therefore ſaid to make uſe of this Manner of ſpeaking, only becauſe it is more awful and ſolemn, and, conſequently, apt to make deeper Impreſſions, and beget a ſtronger Confidence in the Hearers, than a naked Declaration can.

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What by being wroth.

'Tis the Manner of the Scripture to aſcribe to God *Hands*, *Eyes*, *and Feet*, but the Deſign is not, that we ſhould believe

(*s*) *Bibliotheca Bibl.* in Numb. xxii. (*t*) Ibid. in Numb. xxiv. 14, 25. (*u*) Vid. Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, p. 250. (*x*) Gen. xxii. 16. (*y*) Jer. xliv. 26. (*z*) Ibid. li. 14. (*a*) Iſaiah lxii. 8. (*b*) Amos iv. 2. (*c*) Pſal. lxxxix. 49. (*d*) Amos viii. 7.

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believe that he has any of theſe Members according to the literal Signification; but only, that he has a Power to execute all thoſe Acts, to which theſe Members in us are ſo very ſubſervient. 'Tis the Manner of the ſame Scripture to repreſent him as affected with the like *Paſſions*, that we feel in ourſelves, when we are angry or pleas'd, have our Hearts attender'd, or provok'd to Revenge; and yet, upon Reflection, we cannot think, that any of theſe Paſſions are inherent in the divine Nature, but the Meaning only is, *(e)* that God will as certainly *puniſh* the *Wicked*, as if he were inflam'd with the Paſſion of *Anger*, or *Revenge*; and as infallibly *relieve*, or *reward* the *Good*, as we will thoſe, for whom we have tender Compaſſion, or affectionate Love. So that it is only by Way of *Analogy*, and Compariſon, that the Nature and Paſſions of Men are aſcrib'd to God; and therefore certainly when he is pleas'd to expreſs himſelf in Accommodation to our Capacities, (inſtead of making it a Matter of Cavil, and Reproach) we ought to be thankful for his Condeſcenſion, and to interpret his Words in a Senſe, ſuitable to his divine *Majeſty*.

God's Extirpation of the Canaanites vindicated.

IT cannot be deny'd indeed, but that the utter Extirpation of the *Canaanites* carries a Face of Rigour and Severity, not ſo very conſiſtent with God's frequent Declarations of his Mercy and Long-ſuffering; but then it ſhould be conſider'd, that as he is full of Lenity and Mercy to thoſe that endeavour to pleaſe him, ſo he has thought fit to declare, with the ſame Breath, that he will *(f) by no Means clear the Guilty*. Let us then ſee how the Caſe ſtood between God and theſe Nations, when the *Iſraelites* were ſent to diſpoſſeſs them.

THERE is no Queſtion to be made, but that moſt of theſe People had at firſt the true Worſhip of God inſtituted amongſt them, and that their ſeveral Progenitors took Care to leave behind them worthy Conceptions of him; but notwithſtanding this, in the Days of *Moſes* we find their Notions ſo corrupted, and all Kinds of Idolatry ſo publickly eſtabliſh'd, that the Land is ſaid to have been *defiled with them*, and, like a Stomach overcharg'd with unwholſome Diet, to have nauſeated, *(g) and ſpued them up*.

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IN denouncing the Sentence of their Exciſion therefore, *(h) ye ſhall ſmite them, and utterly deſtroy them, and ſave alive, nothing that breatheth*, God intimates the Reaſon of his Severity by the Enumeration of theſe Particulars; *(i) ye ſhall deſtroy their Altars, and break down their Statues, and cut down their Groves, and burn their graven Images with Fire:* Even the Images of *Chemoſh*, and *Peor*, and *Moloch*, and other deteſtable Idols, to whom they are ſaid to have offer'd human Sacrifices, and to have *(k) made their Seed paſs thro' the Fire*. Nor was their Idolatry leſs provoking, than the Corruption of their *Morals*, ſince Adultery, and Beſtiality of all Kinds, Inceſt, and all Manner of Uncleanneſs they both avowedly practis'd, and *(l) took Pleaſure in thoſe that did them*.

THE *Midianitiſh* Women in particular, by proſtituting their Bodies, in order to draw the young *Iſraelites* into Idolatry, had given ſufficient Evidence of their incorrigible Attachment to Wickedneſs, and how impoſſible it would be for the People, whom God had ſelected from the reſt of the World, to preſerve their Integrity, if theſe, and ſuch like publick Seducers were permitted to live among them; and therefore God aſſigns this, as another Reaſon for their Extirpation: *(m) Becauſe thou art an holy People unto the Lord thy God, and he has choſen thee, to be a ſpecial People unto himſelf, above all People, that be upon the Face of the Earth*; *(n)* therefore *ſhalt thou conſume all the People, which the Lord thy God ſhall deliver* into thy Hands; *thine Eyes ſhall have no Pity upon*

(e) Biſhop *King*'s Sermon of Divine Pred. vii. 2. and xx. 16. *(f)* Numb. xiv. 18. *(g)* Lev. xviii. 28. *(h)* Deut. vii. 2. *(i)* Ibid. vii. 5. *(k)* Lev. xviii. 21. *(l)* Rom. i. 32. *(m)* Deut. vii. 6. *(n)* Ibid. vii. 16. and Exod. xxiii. 33.

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upon them, leſt they turn thee away from following me, to ſerve other Gods, which will ſurely be a Snare unto thee.

Now, if either the incorrigible Wickedneſs of any People, or the Danger of their corrupting others by their Enticements and bad Examples, may be deem'd a ſufficient Reaſon (as it is in all *civil* Governments, to cut off *obnoxious* Members) for God to rid himſelf of any Nation, that has incurr'd his higheſt Diſpleaſure, the *Iſraelites*, who were only Inſtruments in God's Hands, are no more to be blam'd for executing the Almighty's Commands, than the Perſon, who apprehends a *Malefactor*, and brings him to condign Puniſhment, is to be thought culpable by the Laws of the Land. And, tho' the *Malefactor* may poſſibly plead for himſelf, that he never did the *Apprehender*, or even the Executioner any Wrong; yet this will be of no Weight or Significance to the *Magiſtrate*, when he calls upon the inferior *Officer* to do his Duty. *(o)* Do but then allow the high and mighty *Magiſtrate* of Heaven and Earth as much Right, as his *Deputies* have that act under him, and a Judgment ſufficient to determine what concerns the *publick Good*, and then certainly the *Iſraelites*, acting by his Orders, had at leaſt as clear a Right to deſtroy the *Canaanites*, as any Executioner can have to take away Life by Command of Authority.

There is ſomething perhaps, that we may think more affecting in the Caſe of the innocent Children, which fell in this common Devaſtation; but then we are to conſider, that as the *Lives of all* Mankind *are in the Hands of God that gave them*, ſo may he demand them back again, when, or in what Manner, he pleaſes; and as well may we quarrel with his Providence, for ſending a deſtroying Angel arm'd with a Famine, a Deluge, or a Peſtilence, which ſweep away Young and Old together, as we may with his deputing the *Hebrews* to be the Agents of his high *Behеſts*, in a general and promiſcuous Slaughter of ſuch Nations, as his divine Juſtice and Wiſdom had *predeſtinated* to Deſtruction.

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The *Jews*, it muſt be own'd, have ſeveral Rules of Life, and Cuſtoms peculiar to themſelves, and by a rigorous Obſervance of theſe, they contracted among other Nations the Character of being a ſullen and unſociable People, Haters of the reſt of Mankind, and averſe to all civil Society and Commerce. Thus *Manetho*, as he is quoted *(p)* by *Grotius*, lays this heavy Charge upon them, that *they would hold no Manner of Correſpondence with any Mortal, that was not initiated into their Religion.* *Tacitus* ſays of them, *that tho' they are courteous enough to one another, yet they purſue Foreigners with the utmoſt Rage of exaſperated Enemies.* And (to name no more) *Diodorus* relates, that *they were the only People in the World, who rejected all Commerce and Friendſhip with Foreigners; and, not only ſo, but treated them as Enemies.* But all this muſt certainly be a groſs Miſtake; becauſe the Law of *Moſes* expreſsly commands thoſe, that live under it to do good to Mankind in general; not only to love their Nighbours, *(q)* but to *love the Stranger* likewiſe, and in *no Caſe (r) to vex or oppreſs him*, for this very Reaſon, *becauſe they were Strangers in the Land of Egypt:* And therefore *Joſephus*, in his Book *(s)* againſt *Appion*, tells us, that tho' their Law-giver would not admit thoſe, who came *occaſionally* only to the Solemnities of their Religion; yet, among other Things, *theſe* he enjoin'd as neceſſary, and almoſt eſſential Clauſes in his Law; *viz. to ſupply every one with Fire, Water, and Proviſions, that was in Want, and to direct the Traveller in the Road*; which plainly contradicts the Repreſentation, which the * *Roman Satyriſt* thought fit to give of them.

That the Jews did not refuſe Commerce with other Nations.

If

(o) Scripture Vindicated, Part. II. *(p)* Annot. in Deut. vii. *(q)* Deut. x. 19. *(r)* Exod. xxii. 21. *(s)* Lib. ii.

* Non monſtrare vias eadem niſi ſacra colenti,
Quæſitum ad fontem ſolos deducere verpos. *Juv.* Sat. xiv.

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IF we conſult the Practice of the firſt Founders of the *Jewiſh* Nation, we ſhall find *Abraham (t)* making an Alliance with *Abimelech*, King of *Gerar*, at *Beer-ſheba*, and aſſiſting even the impious *Sodomites*, when he thought them unjuſtly invaded by their Enemies: We ſhall find *Iſaac (u)* entering into a *Covenant* with the ſame, or another King of the ſame Name at the ſame Place; and *Jacob (x)* ſigning Articles of Agreement with *Laban*, his Father-in-Law. Nor can we think, that the Promulgation of the *Jewiſh* Ordinances made any Alteration in this Particular, or laid any Reſtraint upon their Votaries from joining in Treaties of Commerce, or any other Negotiations, that tended to the Benefit of human Society. For, had this been the Caſe, we cannot conceive how *(y)* both *David* and *Solomon* could have ventur'd to make a League with *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*, without offending God; which they were ſo far from doing, that *Solomon* in particular (as *(z)* the ſacred Hiſtory informs us) was directed by *that Wiſdom, which he receiv'd from God*, when he made his Confederacy with this *heathen* Prince.

EXCEPTING then thoſe ſeveral People, whom God had appointed the *Iſraelites*, at their Entrance into *Canaan*, to deſtroy, and ſome other Kings and Nations afterwards, againſt whom he had ſent out his Prophets, to denounce Vengeance for their ſad Impieties, the *Jews* were forbidden to maintain a *civil* Intercourſe with none; but on the contrary, were frequently excited, to uſe Kindneſs and Hoſpitality to Aliens, as well as others, that all the World might ſee (as *(a) Joſephus* puts the Words into *Solomon*'s Mouth, at the Dedication of the Temple) *that the Hebrews were not ſo inhumane, as to envy Strangers the common Diſpenſations of the Author and Fountain of all our Happineſs.*

NUMB. XXXVII.

AND, for this very Reaſon, *(b)* I am confident, it was, that the *Hebrews* are ſo often reminded by God of their having been Strangers and Bondſlaves in the Land of *Egypt*, that, by their Hoſpitality and Charity, they might comfort and relieve thoſe, who were in the like Condition; that (in the Words of the Prophet) *(c) they might draw out their Soul to the Hungry, and ſatisfy the afflicted Soul; that they might bring the Poor that were caſt out, to their Houſes; cover the Cold and Naked, and not hide themſelves from their own* Fleſh. For this Cauſe are they ſo frequently call'd upon (in the Words of the ſame Prophet) *(d) to look unto the Rock whence they were hewn, and to the Hole of the Pit whence they were digged, to look unto* Abraham *their Father, and to* Sarah *that bare them*; that the happy Change of their Circumſtances might beget in them a perpetual Gratitude to their great Benefactor, and the Obſcurity of their *Origin* teach them to be humble.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

Why they are ſo often put in Mind of their Bondage *in* Egypt, *&c.*

'TIS Part of the Admonition of *Moſes* to the *Iſraelites*, *(e) thou ſhalt remember, all the Way, which the Lord thy God led thee, theſe forty Years, in that terrible Wilderneſs, wherein were fiery Serpents, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thy Heart, and whether thou wouldeſt keep his Commandments or no.* What reſtrain'd the Serpents, which were ſo numerous in the Wilderneſs, from ſtinging the *Hebrews*, was doubtleſs that great and ſovereign *Being*, who reſided in the Pillar of the Cloud, to cover the Camp in their March, and make every noxious Creature flee before them. *(f)* Several Authors are of Opinion, that the Serpents which bit the *Iſraelites*, were of the *flying Kind*, and might be call'd *Fiery*, by Reaſon of their Colour. *Herodotus* informs us, that *Arabia* produc'd this Sort of Serpents in great

Why the Serpents *in the Wilderneſs did not hurt the* Iſraelites *ſooner.*

(*t*) Gen. xxi. 22. (*u*) Ibid. xxvi. 28. (*x*) Ibid. xxxi. 44. (*y*) 2 Sam. v. 11. (*z*) 1 Kings v. 12. (*a*) Jewiſh Antiq. Lib. viii. c. 2. (*b*) Vid. Exod. xxii. 21. Lev. xxv. 42, 55. and Deut. x. 19. (*c*) Iſaiah lviii. 10. 7. (*d*) Ibid. li. 1, 2. (*e*) Deut. viii. 2. (*f*) *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol III. Lib. xii.

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Abundance; and the Time of the Year, wherein the *Iſraelites* were under this Calamity, was in the Seaſon, when theſe Creatures uſually are upon the Wing, to viſit the neighbouring and adjacent Countries; and might now be directed into the Camp of the *Iſraelites* as a great Army; (for ſo God *(g)* calls the *Locuſt, the Canker-worm, the Caterpillar, and the Palmer-Worm, his great Army)* to deſtroy and depopulate without Controul. For however the Divine Preſence had protected them before, the People were now in a State of Rebellion; they were murmuring at the Tedioufneſs of their Journeyings, and at their Want of Proviſions, tho' every Day fed by Providence at the Expence of a Miracle. So that God, being angry with them, had remov'd their heavenly *Safeguard*; and no ſooner was it remov'd, but Things were left to their natural Courſe. The Serpents reſum'd their Venom; and, *(h)* as it was now in the Heat of Summer, when Creatures of this Kind are naturally moſt poiſonous, they raiſed ſuch Sores, and ſudden Inflammations wherever they fell, as occaſion'd Death in ſome of the moſt guilty, and violent Pains in all, until God was pleas'd to provide them with a Remedy of a Nature ſomewhat extraordinary.

Why God appointed a Brazen Serpent *to be erected.*

Whether the Sight of *Braſs* (as ſome *Naturaliſts* ſay) be hurtful or no, in ſuch Caſes, this is certainly a Preſcription of *Phyſicians*, that ſuch People, as are bitten with any venomous Beaſt, ſhould be kept from the Sight of the very Image of the Beaſt, from which they receiv'd ſuch Hurt: And therefore God might take Occaſion, from the Incongruity of the *Means*, to magnify his own Power, making uſe of this Kind of Remedy, that the *Iſraelites* might know, and be convinc'd, that both the *Diſeaſe* and *Medicine* came from him. When our bleſſed Saviour cur'd the blind Man in the Goſpel, *he ſpit on the Ground, and made Clay, and ſpread it all over his Eyes*, which ſome Standers-by might be apt to believe was a likelier Way to put them quite out, than to recover them; but when they ſaw the Thing have its Effect, they glorify'd God, and *ſaid*, *(i) How can a Man, that is a Sinner, do ſuch Miracles?* Becauſe they could not but perceive, that it was a greater Miracle to work the Cure by *incompetent* or *incongruous* Means, than by none at all. And, in like Manner, if, inſtead of ſetting up this brazen Serpent upon a Pole, God had order'd the *Iſraelites* to apply a Leaf of any common Herb to the Bite of theſe poiſonous Serpents; (as he did *Hezekiah* to *(k) lay a Lump of Figs for a Plaiſter upon his Boil)* the Cure might have been the ſame, but then the Singularity of it had not been ſo remarkable. Men might have imputed it to ſome ſecret Virtue in the Plant, which now can be aſcrib'd to nothing but the ſuperlative Power of God, who, even by contrary Means, can bring about what Ends he pleaſes.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

And without it had its Virtue.

The Deſign of thoſe Men however can hardly be good, who, to rob God of the Glory of the Cure, would impute it to ſome *ſecret Quality* in the brazen Serpent itſelf. *(l)* A *Taliſman*, which (according to the common Account) is a certain Piece of Metal, made under the Influence of ſuch and ſuch Plants and Conſtellations, with a wonderful Power to beget Love, and overcome Enemies; to drive away noxious Animals, and cure Diſeaſes, *&c.* is a *chimerical* Notion; and, *(m)* to reſemble the Figure, which God appointed *Moſes* to ſet up, to any of theſe vain Devices, is a Scheme that † deſerves our Scorn, more than our Confutation.

(*g*) Joel ii. 25. (*h*) *Patrick*'s Comment. on Numb. xx. (*i*) John ix. 16. (*k*) Iſaiah xxxviii. 21.
(*l*) *Saurin*'s Diſſertations. (*m*) *Le Clerc*'s Comment. on the xxiſt of Numb.

† Sir *John Marſham* has collected ſeveral Paſſages from the prophane Writers, which hint at *Charms* and Inchantments *to* cure the Bite of Serpents; and he ſays, the *Hebrews* made uſe of Inchantments for this very Purpoſe, which Aſſertion he endeavours to ſupport by a Citation from *Pſal.* lviii. 4, 5. by another from *Eccleſiaſtes*, chap. x. 8; and by a third from *Jeremiah*, chap. viii. 17; and, from the whole of what he offers, he wou'd intimate, that the Cure

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tation. The Author of the *Book of Wiſdom*, addreſſing himſelf to God, and ſpeaking of the *Iſraelites*, has imputed the Virtue of this Serpent to its true Cauſe: *(n) He, that turned himſelf towards it, was not healed by the Thing which he ſaw, but by Thee, who art the Saviour of all.* And, accordingly, in the foregoing Verſe, he calls it *a Sign, or Symbol of Salvation, to put them in Remembrance of the Commandment of the Law.*

THE only conſiderable Difficulty in the whole Tranſaction, is, why God, who had forbidden all Manner of Images, ſhould, on this Occaſion, command one to be made. This the *Jewiſh* Doctors *(as* † *Juſtin Martyr* obſerves in his Days) could give no Account of: But had they *known Jeſus Chriſt*, and *him crucified*, they might have ſoon perceiv'd, *(o)* that God intended it for a *Type* of the Death of Chriſt, and the Manner in which he was to die; and that the Effects of the Brazen Serpent upon them, who look'd on it, did repreſent the Virtue receiv'd by true Believers from the Death of their Redeemer. For ſo we find our Saviour himſelf applying the myſterious Meaning of it; *(p) As* Moſes *lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderneſs, even ſo muſt the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoſo believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have eternal Life.*

THUS we have anſwer'd the ſeveral Doubts and Objections, that have been made to that Part of the Hiſtory of *Moſes*, which includes this Period of Time: And if the Atteſtation of profane Writers may be thought any Confirmation of what has been ſaid, we have the Practice of moſt ſubſequent *Law-givers*, in Imitation of this great *Jewiſh* Leader, pretending to a Familiarity with ſome fictitious Deity or other, and thence deriving their Inſtitutions: And whoever compares the ſacred and fabulous Account of Things together, will find a near Reſemblance between *Aaron* and the heathen *Mercury*; and that, as this falſe Deity is ſaid to have been an *Egyptian* by Birth, the Meſſenger and Interpreter of the Gods, and is generally painted with a *Caduceus*, or Wand in his Hand twiſted about with Snakes; ſo *Aaron* was himſelf born in *Egypt*, and appointed by God to be *(q)* an *Interpreter* to his Brother *Moſes*, and a *Meſſenger* to *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians*, in whoſe Preſence he threw down his *Wonder-working* Rod, and it immediately became a Serpent.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

THE whole Hiſtory of *Balaam* (as *Romantick* as it ſeems) is ſtill upon Record in the ancient *oriental* Writers, from whence the preſent *Mahometans* have borrow'd many Things. 'Tis not improbable, that the Speaking of his *Aſs* gave handle to the Fiction of ſeveral other brute Creatures, upon leſs momentous Occaſions, *accoſting* their Maſters. That the Deſarts wherein the *Iſraelites* journey'd, were infeſted with Serpents of ſo venomous a Kind, that their Biting was deadly, and above the Power of Art to Cure, both *Strabo* and *Diodorus* teſtify. And (to inſtance no farther) the Worſhip of *Æſculapius*, the known God of *Phyſick*, under the Form of a *Serpent*, and what ſome late Travellers tell us of the *Indians* carrying about a wreathed Serpent, upon a Pearch, to which they pay their Adorations every Morning, had manifeſtly their Original from ſome Tradition or other of this Serpent's Image, which *Moſes* was directed to ſet up. So true is the Character

Cure of the *Iſraelites* was not miraculous, but that the Brazen Serpent was properly a *Charm* for the Calamity, or an *Amulet* for the Diſtemper; but it would be trifling to refute this Opinion. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. x ii

(n) Wiſd. xvi. 7.

† In his Book againſt *Trypho*, he inſiſts upon this Serpent, as a *Type* of *Chriſt*, and appealing to the Company, what Reaſon (excluſive of that) could be given of this Matter, one of the *Jews* confeſs'd, that he was in the Right, and that he himſelf had enquir'd for a Reaſon among the *Jewiſh* Maſters, and could meet with none. *Kidder*'s Demonſtration, p. 73.

(o) Kidder, ibid. *(p)* John iii. 14, 15. *(q)* Exod. vii. 1, 2.

A. M. 2515, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

racter (confirm'd by *Teſtimonies* of all Kinds) which the *ſacred* Writers give us of this *Moſes*, the Servant of the Lord, that, both as the Leader, the Law-giver, and Hiſtorian of his People, *(r) he was found faithful in all his Houſe.*

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

DISSERTATION III.

Of the Profane Hiſtory, Religion, Government, &c. of ſuch Nations, as the Israelites *had Dealings with, during this Period.*

TOWARDS the Concluſion of the foregoing Book, we carry'd the Succeſſion of the *Egyptian* Kings down to the Reign of *Amenophis*, who (according to the moſt receiv'd Accounts) was that obſtinate Prince, that in Purſuit of the *Hebrews*, together with all his Army, was loſt in the Waves of the *Red-Sea:* Nor ſhould we, as yet, concern ourſelves any farther with the Hiſtory of that Nation, but that his Son and Succeſſor, *Seſoſtris*, † who liv'd in the Time of the *Iſraelites* Peregrination in the Wilderneſs, and may therefore properly take this Place here, was a Perſon of ſo diſtinguiſh'd a Character, that, to paſs him by in Silence, would be doing an Injury to our Reader.

As

(r) Heb. iii. 5.

† It is a Matter of no ſmall Diſpute among *Chronologers*, in what Time it was this *Seſoſtris* liv'd. The ſeeming Analogy of the Name makes Sir *John Marſham* think, that *Seſoſtris* was the ſame with Shishak, *King of* Egypt, *who, in the Days of* Rehoboam, *came up againſt* Jeruſalem, *and took away the Treaſures of the Houſe of the Lord, the Treaſures of the King's Houſe, and all the Shields which* Solomon *had made*, &c. 1 Kings xiv. 25, 26. What confirms him in this Opinion, is a Paſſage in *Joſephus*, wherein he tells us, that *God avenged himſelf upon* Rehoboam, *by the Hand of* Shiſhak, *King of* Egypt, *concerning whom* Herodotus *(being miſtaken) aſcribes what he did to* Seſoſtris, Jewiſh Antiq. lib. viii. c. 4. But what if, in this Matter, *Joſephus* himſelf ſhould be miſtaken, and not *Herodotus?* *Joſephus* certainly took his Antiquities from the Records of the *Jews*, which gave a full Account of what happen'd to *Abraham*, and his Poſterity, both before and after they inherited the Land of *Canaan*; but gave no Account at all of that Country, while it was in other Hands, and particularly while the *Iſraelites* were in the Wilderneſs: And therefore it is more probable, that *Joſephus* knew of no Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan* by the *Egyptians*, before the Time of *Rehoboam*. For when he applies what *Herodotus* ſays of *Seſoſtris*'s *ſetting up ſeveral infamous Pillars, to ſtigmatize the Countries, which he conquer'd, for Cowardice*, to *Shiſhak*, after his Expedition againſt the *Jews*, he plainly gives us to underſtand, that he knew of no other Expedition from *Egypt* againſt the Land of *Canaan* before that. And indeed theſe very Pillars are enough to decide the Matter, that our *Seſoſtris* was not *Shiſhak*. *Shiſhak* made an Irruption into *Judea*, plunder'd the Temple and Country, and ſo went back again into *Egypt*. Now, had he ſet up ſuch Pillars, as a perpetual Mark of Infamy upon the *Jews*, can we imagine, that they would have let them ſtand, even to be ſeen in *Herodotus*'s Time, and not immediately pull'd them down upon his Retreat? But, on the other hand, if *Seſoſtris*, who ſucceeded the *Pharaoh*, who was drowned in the *Red-Sea*, conquer'd *Canaan*, and ſet up ſuch Pillars, there is good Reaſon to think, that they might continue a long while, becauſe the *Canaanites*, who were a conquer'd People, dar'd not pull them down in his Reign, and in the Time of the *Deputies*, who govern'd under him; and the *Iſraelites*, who knew, that theſe Pillars were no Reflection on them, but only on their Enemies, would be inclinable enough to let them ſtand. It is much more probable then, that the Miſtake belongs to *Joſephus*, and not to *Herodotus*; becauſe *Herodotus*, in what he aſſerts of *Seſoſtris*, agrees with *Diodorus* and others: But, to fix the Actions of *Seſoſtris* upon *Shiſhak*, there is no one antient Author, that will agree with *Joſephus*. *Ariſtotle* affirms, (Polit. lib. i. c. 10.) that the Kingdom of *Seſoſtris* was much older, in Point of Time, than that of *Minos* in *Crete*, which every one owns was in the Time of *Joſhua*. *Pliny* maintains, (Nat. Hiſt. lib. xxxvii. c. 8.) That *Troy* was taken in the Time of *Rameſſes*, who was the third Deſcendant from *Seſoſtris*. *Strabo* avers, (Lib. ult.) that *Seſoſtris* was long before the *Trojan* Times; and Sir *John Marſham*, and, in general, all the Writers of the *Argonautick* Expedition own plainly, that the Colonies of *Seſoſtris* had been at *Colchis* before that, which all agree to have been a Century before the Fall of *Troy*. And (if to theſe we may add two *Moderns*) both the learned Prelate *Uſher*, and the learned Biſhop *Cumberland*, do unanimouſly agree, in making *Seſoſtris* to be the Son of that *Pharaoh*, who was drowned in the *Red-Sea*; which the latter of theſe has given ſeveral Arguments to prove. *Sanchon*, Page 402. But theſe the learned *Author of the Connection of the ſacred and Profane Hiſtory* has endeavour'd to invalidate, and thereupon concludes "That *Seſoſtris* "ſhou'd be the Son of *Pharaoh*, who was drown'd in the *Red-Sea*, and that in the State, which his Father's Misfortunes "muſt have reduc'd *Egypt* to, he ſhould immediately find Strength ſufficient to ſubdue Kingdom after Kingdom, and "to erect himſelf a large Empire over many great and flouriſhing Nations; this muſt be thought by any one, who "duly conſiders Things, to ſeem, at firſt Sight, a moſt *Romantic* Fiction. Vol. III. Lib. xi.

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The Life of Seſoſtris.

AS ſoon as *Seſoſtris* was born, ſome Hiſtorians tell us that *Vulcan* appear'd to his Father in his Sleep, and inform'd him, that *his Son ſhould conquer the whole World*; upon which Preſumption it was, that he took ſo much Care, not of his Education only, but of every male Child's likewiſe, that was born on the ſame Day with him, even through all his kingdom of *Egypt*. The Number of theſe is ſaid to have amounted to ſeventeen Hundred in all; and the King gave Orders, that they ſhould be train'd up in the ſame Diſcipline, and Exerciſes, with his Son, as juſtly ſuppoſing, that they, who had been the conſtant and equal Companions of his Childhood and Youth, would prove his moſt faithful *Miniſters*, and affectionate *Fellow-Soldiers*. *(s)* Having therefore provided Tutors, and Maſters, and every Thing neceſſary for this Purpoſe, he had them, by Degrees, inured to laborious and manly Exerciſes, as well as inſtructed in all liberal and uſeful Sciences, that, as they grew up, by the Strength of their *Bodies*, and the Cultivation of their *Minds*, they might be equally fitted either to *command*, or *execute*.

AMENOPHIS, after he had been at this vaſt Expence and Trouble in laying the Foundation of his Son's future *Grandeur*, reſolv'd to give him and his Companions an Opportunity of diſplaying the good Effects of their Education; and accordingly ſent him, and them along with him, at the Head of an Army into *Arabia*. In this Expedition, the young *Seſoſtris* ſurmounted all the Dangers of Serpents and venomous Creatures, all the Wants and Hardſhips of a dry and barren Country, and, in the End, conquer'd the *Arabians*, a rude and barbarous People, that had never been vanquiſh'd before.

FROM *Arabia* his Father order'd him *Weſtward*, where he ſubdu'd the greateſt Part of *Africk*; but, while he was engag'd in this Expedition, News was brought him, that his Father, and all his Army, were drown'd in the *Red-Sea*, which made him deſiſt from his Conqueſts, and haſten home with his Army, in order to ſecure his Succeſſion to the Kingdom. Whether it was that he call'd to Mind the Prediction of the God *Vulcan*, or was inſtructed by *Mercury*, who prepar'd him for the War; was aſſur'd of Succeſs by Divination, by Dreams in the Temple, or Prodigies in the Air; or perſuaded to it by his Daughter *Athyrte*, a young Lady of uncommon Underſtanding, and who made it out to her Father, that the Thing was practicable; but ſo it was, that no ſooner was he ſettled upon the *Egyptian* Throne, but his Thoughts began to ſwell, and his Mind to graſp at an *univerſal Monarchy*.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

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TO this Purpoſe he endeavour'd, in the firſt Place, to oblige every one to the utmoſt of his Power: Some, by Largeſſes in Money; others, by Donations in Land; many, by the Conceſſion of free Pardons; and every one by fair Speeches, and a courteous and affable Behaviour upon all Occaſions. Thoſe, that were condemned for High-Treaſon, he releas'd with Impunity; and, by paying what they ow'd, diſcharg'd ſuch, as were in Priſon for Debt. In the next Place, he reſettled

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A. M. 2515, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

racter (confirm'd by *Teſtimonies* of all Kinds) which the *ſacred* Writers give us of this *Moſes*, the Servant of the Lord, that, both as the Leader, the Law-giver, and Hiſtorian of his People, *(r) he was found faithful in all his Houſe.*

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

DISSERTATION III.

Of the Profane Hiſtory, Religion, Government, &c. *of ſuch Nations, as the* Israelites *had Dealings with, during this Period.*

TOWARDS the Concluſion of the foregoing Book, we carry'd the Succeſſion of the *Egyptian* Kings down to the Reign of *Amenophis*, who (according to the moſt receiv'd Accounts) was that obſtinate Prince, that in Purſuit of the *Hebrews*, together with all his Army, was loſt in the Waves of the *Red-Sea:* Nor ſhould we, as yet, concern ourſelves any farther with the Hiſtory of that Nation, but that his Son and Succeſſor, *Seſoſtris*, † who liv'd in the Time of the *Iſraelites* Peregrination in the Wilderneſs, and may therefore properly take this Place here, was a Perſon of ſo diſtinguiſh'd a Character, that, to paſs him by in Silence, would be doing an Injury to our Reader.

As

(r) Heb. iii. 5.

† It is a Matter of no ſmall Diſpute among *Chronologers*, in what Time it was this *Seſoſtris* liv'd. The ſeeming Analogy of the Name makes Sir *John Marſham* think, that *Seſoſtris* was the ſame with Shishak, *King of* Egypt, *who, in the Days of* Rehoboam, *came up againſt* Jeruſalem, *and took away the Treaſures of the Houſe of the Lord, the Treaſures of the King's Houſe, and all the Shields which* Solomon *had made*, &c. 1 Kings xiv. 25, 26. What confirms him in this Opinion, is a Paſſage in *Joſephus*, wherein he tells us, that *God avenged himſelf upon* Rehoboam, *by the Hand of* Shiſhak, *King of* Egypt, *concerning whom* Herodotus *(being miſtaken) aſcribes what he did to* Seſoſtris, Jewiſh Antiq. lib. viii. c. 4. But what if, in this Matter, *Joſephus* himſelf ſhould be miſtaken, and not *Herodotus? Joſephus* certainly took his Antiquities from the Records of the *Jews*, which gave a full Account of what happen'd to *Abraham*, and his Poſterity, both before and after they inherited the Land of *Canaan*; but gave no Account at all of that Country, while it was in other Hands, and particularly while the *Iſraelites* were in the Wilderneſs: And therefore it is more probable, that *Joſephus* knew of no Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan* by the *Egyptians*, before the Time of *Rehoboam*. For when he applies what *Herodotus* ſays of *Seſoſtris*'s *ſetting up ſeveral infamous Pillars, to ſtigmatize the Countries, which he conquer'd, for Cowardice*, to *Shiſhak*, after his Expedition againſt the *Jews*, he plainly gives us to underſtand, that he knew of no other Expedition from *Egypt* againſt the Land of *Canaan* before that. And indeed theſe very Pillars are enough to decide the Matter, that our *Seſoſtris* was not *Shiſhak*. *Shiſhak* made an Irruption into *Judea*, plunder'd the Temple and Country, and ſo went back again into *Egypt*. Now, had he ſet up ſuch Pillars, as a perpetual Mark of Infamy upon the *Jews*, can we imagine, that they would have let them ſtand, even to be ſeen in *Herodotus*'s Time, and not immediately pull'd them down upon his Retreat? But, on the other hand, if *Seſoſtris*, who ſucceeded the *Pharaoh*, who was drowned in the *Red-Sea*, conquer'd *Canaan*, and ſet up ſuch Pillars, there is good Reaſon to think, that they might continue a long while, becauſe the *Canaanites*, who were a conquer'd People, dar'd not pull them down in his Reign, and in the Time of the *Deputies*, who govern'd under him; and the *Iſraelites*, who knew, that theſe Pillars were no Reflection on them, but only on their Enemies, would be inclinable enough to let them ſtand. It is much more probable then, that the Miſtake belongs to *Joſephus*, and not to *Herodotus*; becauſe *Herodotus*, in what he aſſerts of *Seſoſtris*, agrees with *Diodorus* and others: But, to fix the Actions of *Seſoſtris* upon *Shiſhak*, there is no one antient Author, that will agree with *Joſephus*. *Ariſtotle* affirms, (Polit. lib. i. c. 10.) that the Kingdom of *Seſoſtris* was much older, in Point of Time, than that of *Minos* in *Crete*, which every one owns was in the Time of *Joſhua*. *Pliny* maintains, (Nat. Hiſt. lib. xxxvii. c. 8.) That *Troy* was taken in the Time of *Rameſſes*, who was the third Deſcendant from *Seſoſtris*. *Strabo* avers, (Lib. ult.) that *Seſoſtris* was long before the *Trojan* Times; and Sir *John Marſham*, and, in general, all the Writers of the *Argonautick* Expedition own plainly, that the Colonies of *Seſoſtris* had been at *Colchis* before that, which all agree to have been a Century before the Fall of *Troy*. And (if to theſe we may add two *Moderns*) both the learned Prelate *Uſher*, and the learned Biſhop *Cumberland*, do unanimouſly agree, in making *Seſoſtris* to be the Son of that *Pharaoh*, who was drowned in the *Red-Sea*; which the latter of theſe has given ſeveral Arguments to prove. *Sanchon*, Page 402. But theſe the learned *Author of the Connection of the ſacred and Profane Hiſtory* has endeavour'd to invalidate, and thereupon concludes "That *Seſoſtris* "ſhou'd be the Son of *Pharaoh*, who was drown'd in the *Red-Sea*, and that in the State, which his Father's Misfortunes "muſt have reduc'd *Egypt* to, he ſhould immediately find Strength ſufficient to ſubdue Kingdom after Kingdom, and "to erect himſelf a large Empire over many great and flouriſhing Nations; this muſt be thought by any one, who "duly conſiders Things, to ſeem, at firſt Sight, a moſt *Romantic* Fiction. Vol. III. Lib. xi.

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The Life of Seſoſtris.

AS ſoon as *Seſoſtris* was born, ſome Hiſtorians tell us that *Vulcan* appear'd to his Father in his Sleep, and inform'd him, that *his Son ſhould conquer the whole World*; upon which Preſumption it was, that he took ſo much Care, not of his Education only, but of every male Child's likewiſe, that was born on the ſame Day with him, even through all his kingdom of *Egypt*. The Number of theſe is ſaid to have amounted to ſeventeen Hundred in all; and the King gave Orders, that they ſhould be train'd up in the ſame Diſcipline, and Exerciſes, with his Son, as juſtly ſuppoſing, that they, who had been the conſtant and equal Companions of his Childhood and Youth, would prove his moſt faithful *Miniſters*, and affectionate *Fellow-Soldiers*. *(s)* Having therefore provided Tutors, and Maſters, and every Thing neceſſary for this Purpoſe, he had them, by Degrees, inured to laborious and manly Exerciſes, as well as inſtructed in all liberal and uſeful Sciences, that, as they grew up, by the Strength of their *Bodies*, and the Cultivation of their *Minds*, they might be equally fitted either to *command*, or *execute*.

AMENOPHIS, after he had been at this vaſt Expence and Trouble in laying the Foundation of his Son's future *Grandeur*, reſolv'd to give him and his Companions an Opportunity of diſplaying the good Effects of their Education; and accordingly ſent him, and them along with him, at the Head of an Army into *Arabia*. In this Expedition, the young *Seſoſtris* ſurmounted all the Dangers of Serpents and venomous Creatures, all the Wants and Hardſhips of a dry and barren Country, and, in the End, conquer'd the *Arabians*, a rude and barbarous People, that had never been vanquiſh'd before.

FROM *Arabia* his Father order'd him *Weſtward*, where he ſubdu'd the greateſt Part of *Africk*; but, while he was engag'd in this Expedition, News was brought him, that his Father, and all his Army, were drown'd in the *Red-Sea*, which made him deſiſt from his Conqueſts, and haſten home with his Army, in order to ſecure his Succeſſion to the Kingdom. Whether it was that he call'd to Mind the Prediction of the God *Vulcan*, or was inſtructed by *Mercury*, who prepar'd him for the War; was aſſur'd of Succeſs by Divination, by Dreams in the Temple, or Prodigies in the Air; or perſuaded to it by his Daughter *Athyrte*, a young Lady of uncommon Underſtanding, and who made it out to her Father, that the Thing was practicable; but ſo it was, that no ſooner was he ſettled upon the *Egyptian* Throne, but his Thoughts began to ſwell, and his Mind to graſp at an *univerſal Monarchy*.

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the antient Diviſion of the Country into ſix and thirty Parts, which the *Egyptians* call *Nomi*, or Provinces; aſſign'd a Governor to each of theſe; and conſtituted his Brother *Armais* (whom the *Greeks* call'd *Danaus)* ſupreme Regent. Him he inveſted with ample Power and Authority: But reſtrain'd him from wearing the Crown, from offering any Injury to the Queen and her Family, and from having any Dealings with the *royal* Concubines.

Having thus ſettled the Government, he proceeded, in the laſt Place, to raiſe an Army equal to the Vaſtneſs of his Deſign, which conſiſted of 600,000 Foot, 24,000 Horſe, and 27,000 warlike Chariots. His principal Officers were taken out of thoſe brave Men, who were train'd up with him in martial Exploits; and, that they might always be in Readineſs (without ſubmitting to any mean Employ) to attend him to the Wars, he took Care to beſtow on them large Eſtates in Land, in ſome of the richeſt and moſt fertile Parts of *Egypt*. With this Army he march'd at firſt againſt the *Ethiopians*, whom he ſoon conquer'd, and made them pay him a Tribute of Ebony, Gold, and Elephants Teeth. But his Land Forces alone were not anſwerable to the Conqueſts he intended; and therefore he fitted out two Fleets of tall Ships, ſomewhat reſembling our modern Form, one in the *Mediterranean Sea*, and the other in the *Arabian Gulf*. With the *Mediterranean* Squadron he conquer'd *Cyprus*, the Sea Coaſts of *Phœnicia*, and ſeveral of the *Cyclades*; and from the *Arabian Gulf* he ſail'd into the *Indian Sea*, and there ſubdu'd all the Coaſts thereof, till, happening to come into a *ſhallow*, and his Ships drawing more Water than uſual, he either was unable, or afraid to go any farther, and ſo return'd into *Egypt*.

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But he had not been long return'd, before his Ambition began to operate afreſh; and therefore, adviſing with his Prieſts, he recruited his Army, and march'd into *Aſia*. The *Iſraelites* were, at this Time, in the Deſarts of *Arabia*; and therefore it may look a little ſtrange, why a Man of *Seſoſtris*'s Spirit ſhould not have been tempted to purſue them. But, beſides the Barrenneſs of the Country, which could never ſupport ſo vaſt a Multitude as he carry'd with him, he could not but reflect on his Father's Fate: And therefore dreading the like miraculous Overthrow, he declin'd the *Iſraelites*, and march'd directly againſt *Canaan*, which, without the leaſt Oppoſition, at once ſubmitted to him; ſo that, impoſing an annual Tribute upon the People, and putting Governors in all their principal Towns, he proceeded in the Courſe of his Conqueſts, and, in a ſhort Time, over-ran all *Aſia*, and ſome Part of *Europe*.

He paſs'd the River *Ganges*, and pierc'd through all *India*, as far as the main Ocean eaſtward: Then * he ſubdu'd the *Scythians*, as far as the River *Tanais*, which divides *Europe* from *Aſia*: Here he brought into Subjection the other Parts of *Aſia*; and from hence he went into *Thrace* in *Europe*; but, as he was marching along the Deſarts, he was in Danger of loſing his Army through the Want of Proviſions, and Difficulty of Paſſes, and therefore † erecting (as his Cuſtom was) his Pillars there,

* Tho' *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, and others do relate, that he was victorious in theſe Countries; yet ſome will have it, that he met with a Repulſe, fled from the *Scythians*, and was worſted by the *Colchians*. For *Juſtin* tells us that *Vexoris*, or *Seſoſtris*, diſpatching Ambaſſadors before him to ſummon the *Scythians* to ſurrender, they ſent back his Meſſengers with Contempt, and Threats, and Defiance, and immediately took up Arms; that *Seſoſtris*, being inform'd that they were advancing towards him by haſty Marches, ſuddenly turn'd about, and fled from before them, leaving all his Baggage and warlike Apparel to the Purſuers, who follow'd him, till he came on the Borders of *Egypt*. Lib. ii. Cap. 3. *Pliny* relates, (Lib. xxxiii. Cap. 3.) that he was overthrown by the King of *Colchis*; and *Valerius Flaccus* inſinuates, that he was repuls'd with great Slaughter, and put to Flight in theſe Parts. Argonaut. Lib. v.

† It was the Cuſtom of this great Warrior to ſet up Pillars in every *Country* he conquer'd, with an Inſcription to this Effect, ——— Seſoſtris, *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, ſubdued this Country by the Power of his Arms*: If the Nation had, without Oppoſition, ignobly ſubmitted to him, beſides the Inſcription, he caus'd the *Privities*

of

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there, he adventur'd to proceed no farther: Tho' the Occaſion of his Return may rather be imputed to the News, which he receiv'd from the *Egyptian* High-Prieſt, of his Brother's Revolt and Uſurpation.

FOR, encourag'd with his long Abſence, and great Diſtance, *Armais* had done every Thing, that was interdicted him: Had aſſum'd the Diadem, violated the Queen, made promiſcuous Uſe of the King's Concubines, and, by the Advice of his falſe Friends, was now meditating to maintain his Uſurpation by Force of Arms: But, hearing of his Brother's Return, he feigns himſelf of another Temper; meets him at *Peluſium*, a Frontier-Town, before he could have certain Intelligence of what had paſs'd; and there receiv'd him with all the Appearance of Submiſſion and Joy, but with a real Deſign, not only to take away his Life, but quite extirpate his whole Family. To this End he invited the King his Brother, the Queen, and her Children, to a Banquet, which he had prepar'd for their Refreſhment; but when they had all drank very plentifully, and were now gone to reſt, he caus'd a great Quantity of dry'd Reeds, which he had before prepar'd for that Purpoſe, to be laid round the King's *Pavilion*, and ſet on Fire, in hopes to deſtroy them all. *Seſoſtris*, perceiving the Danger he was in, and expecting no Aſſiſtance from his *Guards*, who were all overcome with Wine, * lifted up his Hands, and imploring the Gods in Behalf of his Wife and Children, he ruſh'd with them through the Flames; and, being thus unexpectedly preſerv'd, he made Oblations to ſeveral of the Gods, but more eſpecially to *Vulcan*, by whoſe Protection he thought himſelf deliver'd. The Traitor *Armais* being thus defeated in his wicked Deſign, betook himſelf to Arms; but was ſoon diſcomfitted by *Seſoſtris*, and forc'd to flee into *Greece*, where he ſettled at *Argos*, and, not long after, was choſen King; while his victorious Brother, after nine Years Abſence, returning in Triumph into *Egypt*, adorn'd the Temples with rich Spoils: And, having diſbanded his Army, after he had rewarded them according to their Merit, he began to apply his Mind to ſuch ſtupendous Works, as might immortalize his Name, and everlaſtingly contribute to the publick Good.

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HE built a Temple in every City in *Egypt*, and dedicated it to the peculiar God of the Place. This was a Work, wherein he employ'd none but *Captives*, and therefore he had it inſcrib'd upon each Temple, *None of the Natives were put to labour here.* He rais'd vaſt Mounts and Hills of Earth, to which he remov'd the Cities, that had before too low a Situation, in order to ſecure both Man and Beaſt from the Danger of the *Nile*'s Inundations. All the Way, from *Memphis* to the Sea, he dug Canals, which from the *Nile* branch'd out, and, not only made an eaſier Conveyance from Place to Place, but greatly advanc'd the Trade and Proſperity of the Kingdom. All the Towns, that were upon the Frontiers, and lay before expos'd to any ſuperior Number of Forces, he fortify'd againſt the Incurſions of Enemies, and made them of difficult Acceſs. He defended the Eaſt Side of *Egypt* againſt

of a Woman to be carv'd, as a Mark of their *Effeminacy* and *Baſeneſs*; but if they had defended themſelves bravely, the Pillars bore the Diſtinction of the contrary Sex, in Teſtimony of their Courage. Beſides theſe, he left Statues of himſelf behind him, two of which were to be ſeen in *Herodotus*'s Time, one on the Road between *Epheſus* and *Phocæa*, and the other, between *Smyrna* and *Sardis*. They were arm'd after the *Ethiopian* and *Egyptian Manner*; held a Javelin in one Hand, and a Bow in the other; and, acroſs the Breaſt, had a Line drawn, from Shoulder to Shoulder, in which was this Inſcription:——— *This Region I obtained by theſe my Soldiers.* Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 3.

* *Herodotus* adds one Circumſtance more: That, waking out of Sleep, and finding his Danger, he conſulted with his Queen what to do in this Extremity, who adviſ'd him to throw two of his Children into the Flames, that they might ſerve as a Bridge for all the reſt; which he accordingly did, and ſo they all eſcap'd. But this is generally deem'd a Miſtake in our Hiſtorian, or a Circumſtance crept in, on Purpoſe to make the Diſtreſs appear more affecting. *Bedford*'s Scripture-Chronology, Lib. iv. c. 5.

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againſt the Irruptions of the *Syrians* and *Arabians*, with a Wall drawn from *Peluſium*, thro' the Deſarts, as far as *Heliopolis*, which is at leaſt fifteen hundred Furlongs. He caus'd a Ship of two hundred and eighty Cubits long to be built all of Cedar, gilded over with Gold without, and lin'd with Silver within; and, to perpetuate the Memory of his Actions, he erected two *Obeliſks* of poliſh'd Marble an hundred and twenty Cubits high, on which was inſcrib'd an Account of the Extent of his Empire, the Value of his Revenue, and the Number of the Nations, which he had conquer'd. One Thing however is reported of him, which argues an horrid Inſolence in ſo great a Man, and tarniſhes his Character not a little, and that is, that, at ſet Times, his Cuſtom was, to have the *Tributary* Kings, and ſuch as held their Dominions under his Favour, to come into *Egypt*, to pay their Homage; and tho' he receiv'd them at firſt with all the Signs of Honour and Reſpect, yet, on certain Occaſions, he would have his Horſes unharneſs'd, and ſome four, or more of theſe Kings yok'd together, and made to draw his Chariot: But, bateing this opprobrious Piece of Arrogance, (* and whereof he was cur'd, before he died) he was certainly, in all Reſpects, the greateſt Prince, that ever ſat upon the *Egyptian* Throne; and (what ſome have accounted an Augmentation of his Greatneſs) after he had reign'd three and thirty Years, he loſt his Eye-Sight, and, out of Diſguſt, laid violent Hands upon himſelf, thereby making his *Magnanimity* in Death (as they call it, equal to the glorious Actions of his Life.

The Hiſtory of the Amalekites.

After that the Children of *Iſrael* had left the *Egyptians* in the *Red-Sea*, the firſt People that gave them any Moleſtation were the *Amalekites*. *Amalek* was the Son of *Elephaz*, by his Concubine *Timna*, as *Eliphaz* was the Firſt-born of *Eſau*. He gave Name both to the People and Country where he liv'd, and, notwithſtanding the Spuriouſneſs of his Birth, is, *(t)* in the Catalogue of Dukes of *Edom*, reckoned as one of them. The Country of the *Amalekites* lay ſomewhere between *Egypt* and *Paleſtine*, and was therefore very probably bounded by *Canaan* to the *North*; by *Egypt*, or its dependent Territories, to the *South*; by *Edom*, or the Land of *Seir*, to the *Eaſt*; and by the Deſarts towards the Sea, or perhaps by the Margin of the Sea itſelf, to the *Weſt*.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

Their Religion was at firſt, no doubt, the ſame that was taught in the Houſe of *Abraham*; but, in Proceſs of Time, they were carry'd away with the general Corruption, and fell into the ſame Idolatry, that their Brethren the *Edomites* practis'd. And, as to their Commerce or Trade, the Situation of their Country might favour them, as much as their Neighbours, and the Superiority of the Power and Greatneſs, to which they had advanc'd themſelves, looks as if they had improv'd it, more than others.

Their Form of Government was *Monarchical*; and, as it appears that the *firſt*, (at leaſt, one of the firſt) and the laſt of their Kings was call'd *Agag*, 'tis no unlikely Suppoſition, that all their intermediate Kings bore the ſame Name. However this be, 'tis certain, that, at this Time, they were a flouriſhing Nation, and grown up to ſuch a † ſudden Height of Power and Grandeur, that their King is

* The Manner in which he was cur'd is ſaid to be this: —— One Day, as ſome of theſe *Tributary* Kings were drawing him along, he perceiv'd one of them to look back upon one of the Wheels, with a very great Stedfaſtneſs; and thereupon enquiring, what might be the Subject of his Thoughts, or the Occaſion of his deep Attention, he receiv'd an Anſwer to this Effect: ——*The going round of the Wheel, O King, calls to my Mind the Viciſſitudes of Fortune: For, as every Part of the Wheel is uppermoſt and lowermoſt by Turns, ſo it is with Men, who, one Day, ſit on a Throne, and, on the next, are reduced to the vileſt Degree of Slavery.* Which Anſwer ſtruck the King with ſuch Compunction, that, for ever after, he gave off this inhumane Practice. *Diodorus*, Lib. i. and Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 3.

(t) Gen. xxvi. 12.

† The Kingdom of *Edom*, commenc'd much about the Time of the *Iſraelites Departure out of* Egypt; and that of *Amalek* could not be much, if any Thing at all, older; and therefore when *Balaam* expreſs'd himſelf in ſo high a

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From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

is ſpoken of, as much ſuperior to any other; and therefore, when *Balaam* foretels the future Majeſty of the *Jewiſh* State, he expreſſes himſelf, *that (t) their King ſhould be higher than Agag*, and ſtiles them the *firſt of the Nations*; which ſeems to countenance the wonderful Things, which the *Arabian* Hiſtorians tell us of theſe People, *viz.* that they once conquer'd *Egypt*, and poſſeſs'd the Throne of that Kingdom for ſeveral Generations. The Truth is, theſe *Amalekites* were a bold and daring People from the very firſt. No ſooner had the *Iſraelites* ſet Foot upon the *Arabian* Shore, but they conſpir'd againſt them, and, falling on their Rear in their March to *Horeb*, made ſome Slaughter among them, which *Joſhua*, as ſoon as he had got his fighting Men in order, took Care to repay; tho' it muſt be confeſs'd, that God, for ſome Time, was pleas'd to make uſe of this Nation (in Conjunction with ſome of the *Canaanites)* to *(u) be Scourges in the Sides, and Thorns in the Eyes*, i. e. his Inſtruments for the Puniſhment of the Diffidence and Diſobedience of his own People.

Of *the* Edomites.

ESAU, who, either from the Colour of his Hair and Complexion, or for ſelling his Birth-right to *Jacob* for a Meſs of *red* Pottage, had the Name of *Edom* given him, was the Progenitor likewiſe of this People. Their ancient Kingdom, when in its *Meridian*, was bounded on the *North*, by the Land of *Canaan*, and the *Salt-Sea*; on the *South*, by the *Arabian Gulf*; on the *Eaſt*, by the Land of *Midian*; and on the *Weſt*, by the Kingdom of *Amalek*: And, in this Compaſs of Ground, they had ſeveral remarkable Cities (beſides two eminent Sea-Ports, *Elath* and *Eſion-geber)* on the *Arabian Gulf*; but the latter of theſe became ſo infamous for the many Wrecks, which befel the Shipping that frequented it, that, in Time, it came to be diſuſed.

THE People were naturally bold and courageous; jealous of their Rights, and always in a Diſpoſition to maintain them; as thoſe, who claim the Empire of the Sea (in the Manner that they did) ſhould always be. As they were deſcended from *Abraham*, we are not to doubt, but that their Belief and Practice were right at firſt, though, by Degrees, *(x)* they fell into Idolatry; and if we can ſuppoſe, that the Book of *Job* was of as ancient Date as is pretended, and that he himſelf liv'd among theſe People, we cannot but acknowledge, that the *(y)* Invention and Uſe of *Conſtellations* in *Aſtronomy*, *(z)* the Art of *Writing*, *(a)* the Art of *Navigation*, and many more Parts of truly uſeful Knowledge, were begun, and cultivated among them.

THE Form of their *civil Conſtitution* ſeems to have varied according to the Exigencies of the Times. The *Horites*, who very early inhabited this Country, were rul'd, at firſt, by their reſpective *Patriarchs*, or Heads of Families; *(b)* till, being overcome by *Chedorlaomer*, King of *Elam*, who ſwept them before him with other Nations, they, to ſecure themſelves for the Time to come, chang'd the Conſtitution into an *elective* Monarchy; and 'twas under this Form of Government, that *Eſau* and his Family liv'd for ſome Time *Sojourners* in this Land. The Monarchy however did not laſt above ſeven or eight Succeſſions, till, ſome Way or other, it came to be divided into ſeveral little independent *Principalities*, or Dukedoms; and, as the Poſterity of *Eſau* exceeded all others in the Number of their *Dukes*, it cannot be incongruous to ſuppoſe,

Strain, concerning *Agag*, and his Monarchy, it could not have been much above forty Years ſtanding. The Expreſſion of *Amalek*'s being *the firſt of the Nations*, our Verſion turns otherwiſe in the Margin, *the firſt of the Nations, that warred againſt* Iſrael; and, if we compare what is ſaid of *Agag*, but thirteen Verſes before, we ſhall not be at a Loſs for the right, at leaſt for a natural Explication of the Words, *viz.* that they were the greateſt and moſt noble Nation at that Time; and accordingly *Le Clerc*'s Verſion ſtiles them, *the firſt Fruits of the Nations*, by which, in his Commentary, he underſtands them to have been the moſt ancient and potent Nation of any of thoſe, which proceeded from the Loins of *Abraham* and *Lot*. Univerſal Hiſtory, lib. i. c. 4.

(*t*) Numb. xxiv. 7. (*u*) Joſh. xxiii. 13. (*x*) 2 Kings viii. 20. (*y*) Job ix. 8. (*z*) Ibid. xix. 24. (*a*) Ibid. ix. (*b*) Biſhop *Cumberland*'s Orig. Gent. Antiq. 4

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that they had the greateſt Hand in bringing about this *Revolution*, and the largeſt Share in the Government, that was founded thereupon.

And as they had the largeſt Share in the Government, 'tis not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe farther, that, in Conſequence of their Power, they ſoon expell'd the *Horite* Dukes, and, at the ſame Time, might force *Amalek*, or his *ſpurious* Offspring, to leave their Dominions. For, in the next Generation, the Poſterity of *Eſau* are ſtiled *abſolute Dukes* of *Edom*, were only eleven in Number, and in all the Country had no *Rivals*. But, as the Approach of the Children of *Iſrael* put them, and every Nation elſe, in a great Conſternation, they thought it moſt conducive to their general Safety, to unite under one common Head; and thereupon having made Choice of a King, they reſolv'd to maintain their Ground againſt any Invaſion. 'Twas to this nameleſs King, or perhaps his Succeſſor, that *Moſes* ſent Ambaſſadors, deſiring a free Paſſage through his Country, which he abſolutely deny'd, and, to let him ſee that he was in earneſt, immediately took the Field; but as his Deſign was to act upon the *Defenſive* only, and not diſtreſs a People, that were his Brethren, in Matters wherein he could relieve them, without Danger to himſelf, (*c*) he ſupply'd them (for their Money) with whatever Neceſſaries they wanted. And thus far the Hiſtory of the *Edomites*, during this Period, goes.

Of the Moabites.

MOAB, the Son of *Lot*, by an inceſtuous Commerce with the elder of his Daughters, was the Progenitor of this People, and gave Name to their Country; which was bounded, on the *Eaſt*, by the Deſarts of *Arabia*; on the *Weſt*, by the Mountains, that lie *Eaſt* from the *Dead-Sea*; on the *North*, by the Country of the *Ammonites*, the Deſcendants of *Lot* by his younger Daughter; and on the *South*, by the Brook, or little River *Zerid*, which runs into the *Dead-Sea*; ſo that, in the whole, it is about forty Miles in *Length*, and as much in *Breadth*.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

That the People had once the Knowledge of the true God, can hardly be doubted; but, in Time, they lov'd not to *retain that Knowledge*, but introduc'd the Worſhip of falſe Gods, with ſuch *monſtrous* and *obſcene* Ceremonies, as are not fit to be nam'd. Their principal Idols were *Chemoſh* and *Baal-peor*; and to theſe they ſacrific'd, on Mountains dedicated to that Service, and in Temples built in their Cities, not only Oxen and Rams, but, upon extraordinary Occaſions, human Victims.

The Form of their Government was *Regal*, and the firſt Inhabitants of their Country were the *Emims*, a great and powerful People, of extraordinary Strength and Stature, very probably the Deſcendants of *Ham*, and of the ſame gigantick Race with the *Anakims* and *Rephaims*, tho' the *Moabites* call'd them by the Name *Emims*, which, in *Hebrew*, ſignifies *terrible*. And too terrible an Enemy had they been for the *Moabites*, had not *Chedorlaomer* and his Allies, by their frequent Incurſions, much weaken'd them, and made them an eaſy Prey. The *Moabites* however, when they had thus diſpoſſeſs'd them, kept not their new Dominions long entire; for *Sihon*, King of the *Amorites*, who border'd on them *eaſtward*, fought againſt the King of *Moab*, and took from him all his Kingdom to the North of the River *Arnon*.

The Succeſſor to this King was *Balak*, who was then upon the Throne, when the *Iſraelites* came, and encamp'd in the Neighbourhood of his Country. His tampering with the infamous *Balaam* was the Reaſon why his People were not permitted to mix, or intermarry with the *Hebrews*; but, as the *Midianites* (whoſe Hiſtory we are now come to) were more particularly *inſtrumental* in ſeducing them to *Idolatry*, their Puniſhment, for the preſent, was more ſevere.

MIDIAN,

(*c*) Deut. ii. 28, 29.

3

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Of the Midianites.

MIDIAN, the fourth Son of *Abraham* by his Wife *Keturah*, is generally reputed to have given Name to the Country, and to have been the Progenitor of the *Midianites*, who, in the early Ages of the World, were confounded with *(d)* the *Iſhmaelites*, and ſoon after ſeem to be conjoin'd with the *(e) Moabites*, as if they had been both one Nation; when the true Reaſon of this ſeeming Commixture was, that, according as they liv'd to the *northern* or *ſouthern* Parts of the Country, of Courſe they join'd themſelves either to the *Moabites* or *Iſhmaelites*; and, upon that Account, are oftentimes promiſcuouſly mention'd in Scripture.

WHAT the Limits of their Country were, 'tis not ſo eaſy a Matter to perceive. Its Boundary on the *Eaſt* is uncertain, but on the *Weſt* it was contiguous to the Land of *Edom*; on the *North*, to the Country of *Moab*; and on the *South*, to the *Red-Sea*.

ITS Inhabitants were very numerous, and may be diſtinguiſh'd into two Sorts, Shepherds and Merchants. The Shepherds mov'd up and down in Tents; they drove their Cattle before them, even when they went to War; and ſeem to have had few or no fix'd Habitations, except ſome ſtrong Holds near the Borders of their Country. The Merchants, in like Manner, travell'd from Place to Place in Companies, or Caravans, (as it is the Cuſtom in thoſe Parts even to this Day) and the only Settlements they ſeem to have had were their *Marts*, and Stations, in Places convenient for their Trade.

BY theſe two different Employs however, the whole Nation flouriſh'd to a great Degree: The Merchants grew exceſſively rich; and the Shepherds, by exchanging with them their Cattle for Gold, and Jewels of all Kinds, were enabled to make a much better Appearance, than other Nations. But, as their Affluence in theſe Things ſoon introduc'd Luxury, they were a People remarkable for all Kinds of Vanity, Riot, and Exceſs. Tho' their Learning could not be great, yet their Merchants were oblig'd to know ſomething of *Writing* and *Arithmetick*, in order to keep their Accounts; and as they were *Traders*, and ſituate on the *Red-Sea*, it can hardly be ſuppos'd, but that they apply'd themſelves to *Ship-building*, in order to explore not only their own Coaſts, but thoſe of other Countries likewiſe, that lay contiguous to them, and conſequently could not be without ſome tolerable Skill in *Geography* and *Geometry*.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

THEIR *Religion* differ'd, according to the Part of the Country which they inhabited. Thoſe, who liv'd in the *North* of *Midian*, fell into all the Abominations of the *Moabites*, and, in their Endeavour to corrupt the *Iſraelites*, quite exceeded them: But thoſe, that were plac'd more towards the *South* (if we may take *Jethro*, who is ſaid to have rul'd over a People near the *Read-Sea*, for a Pattern) retain'd juſt Notions of God, and of the Form of Worſhip, which he had preſcrib'd to their Forefathers; for they offer'd up Praiſes, and Thankſgivings, and Sacrifices to him, tho' their Religious Rites and Ceremonies are not ſpecify'd.

THEIR Form of *Government* might, in the like Manner, be different, according to the Part of the Country which they inhabited, tho', in the main, it looks as if it had been *Ariſtocratical*, rather than *Monarchical*. *Jethro* indeed, in our Tranſlation, is call'd a *Prieſt*; and, becauſe the Word in the Original does equally ſignify a *Prince*, it has generally been concluded, that he had the Honour of being *both*. Mention is likewiſe made of other Princes; and the five, who fell by the Hand of *Iſrael*, are ſometimes ſtil'd *Kings*, and ſometimes *Dukes* of *Midian*: So that this Nation ſeems to have been govern'd by a Multitude of Dukes, or petty Princes, who, perhaps, in their own Juriſdiction, were independent on each other, and yet, ſome Way or other, were, in *Moſes*'s Time, *(f)* Feudatory under *Sihon*, King of the *Amorites*. *Sihon* indeed had made

(d) Gen. xxxvii. 25, 28. *(e)* Ibid. xxxvi. 35. *(f)* Joſh. xiii. 21.

A. M. 2515, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1489, &c.

made a Conqueſt from the *Moabites* of the beſt Part of the Country, he then poſſeſs'd, and, having ſettled himſelf in their Place, made ſeveral of the neighbouring Princes *tributary* to him; but, refuſing a Paſſage to the *Hebrews*, and coming, without † any Provocation, to attack them, he himſelf was ſlain, and his whole Army routed; *Heſhbon*, his capital City, was taken; and all the reſt of his Dominions diſtributed among the *Iſraelites*.

These were the ſeveral Nations, on the *other*, i. e. on the Eaſt-ſide of *Jordan*, which God deliver'd into the Hands of his People; and more we ſhall have to ſay of them, as they meet us in our Way.

From Numb. xviii. to the End of Deuteronomy.

In the mean Time, the Progreſs which the *Iſraelites* have hitherto made, the Enemies they have vanquiſh'd, and the Kingdoms they have ſeiz'd and divided among themſelves, notwithſtanding all the Artifices to prevent them, do ſufficiently verify that Concluſion, at the End of their Leader's laſt Exhortation: (g) *Happy art thou, O* Iſrael! *Who is like unto thee, O People, ſaved by the Lord, the Shield of thy Help; and who is the Sword of thy Excellency? Thine Enemies ſhall be found Liars unto thee, and thou ſhalt tread upon their High Places. The Fountain of* Jacob *ſhall be upon a Land of Corn and Wine, and his Heavens ſhall drop down Dew.*

† It is reckon'd good Policy in a *General*, when he has any great Deſign in Agitation, which cannot ſo well be executed without paſſing through a *neutral* Country, not to aſk Leave at firſt, becauſe too much Civility would lay him under the Suſpicion of Fear; but firſt of all to enter the Prince's Country, and then to ſend and deſire Permiſſion for his Troops to march through it. But this was not *Moſes*'s Practice; he firſt ſent Ambaſſadors to the King of the *Amorites* with this peaceable Meſſage, "Let me paſs through thy Land, we will not turn into the Fields, or into "the Vineyards; we will not drink the Waters of the Well; but we will go along by the King's Highway, till we "be paſt the Borders: *Thou ſhalt ſell me Meat for Money, that I may eat; and give me Water for Money, that I may "drink; only I will paſs through on my Feet.*" Numb. xxi. 22. After ſo civil a Meſſage as this, if *Sihon* thought not proper to let the Children of *Iſrael* paſs through his Country, he might have contented himſelf with ſo doing, becauſe it does not appear, that the *Iſraelites* ever threaten'd to force their Paſſage: But when, inſtead of acting upon the *defenſive*, (which was all that in Reaſon he ſhould have done) he ſets himſelf at the Head of his Forces, and marches out to fight; the War muſt be deem'd unjuſt on his Side, and the Fate he met with no more than his Deſert. *Calmet*'s Dictionary.

(g) Deut. xxxiii. 29, 28.

The End of the Fourth Book.

THE

Hodsell Sculp.

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

BIBLE.

BOOK V.

Containing an Account of Things, from the ISRAELITES *Entrance into the Land of* CANAAN, *to the Building of* SOLOMON's *Temple. In all four-hundred and forty-seven Years.*

CHAP. I.

From their Entrance, to the Death of JOSHUA.

The HISTORY.

A. M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1451, &c.

Joſhua *ſucceeds* Moſes *in the Government of the* Iſraelites.

UPON the Death of *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, who had a long while been his *prime* Miniſter, by the Command of God, undertook the Conduct of the Children of *Iſrael*; and, as it was a very momentous Charge, he was not a little anxious how he ſhould be enabled to execute it. He ſaw himſelf indeed at the Head of *ſix hundred Thouſand* fighting Men; but then the Nations, which he was to ſubdue, were a warlike and gigantick People, that had already taken the Alarm, and therefore made

From Joſh. i. to the End.

A. M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1451, &c.

early Preparations for a Defence; had fortify'd their Cities, and confederated their Forces againſt him. And while he was muſing on theſe Things, to give him Encouragement in his Undertaking, † God was pleas'd to aſſure him, that he would not fail to protect and aſſiſt him in it, in the ſame Manner, as he had done his Predeceſſor *Moſes*, and, provided he took Care to obey his Laws, as *Moſes* had done, make the whole Land of *Canaan* a cheap and eaſy Conqueſt to him: And therefore, without perplexing his Mind any farther, he order'd him immediately to ſet about the Work. From Joſh. i. to the End.

* The City of *Jericho* was juſt oppoſite to the Place, where he was to * paſs the River *Jordan*; and, as it was the firſt that he intended to attack, he thought it adviſeable to ſend two Spies thither, to take a View of the Situation, and Strength, and Avenues of the Place. As ſoon as the Spies were gone, he bad the Officers go thro' the Camp, and give the People *He ſends Spies into the Land of Canaan.*

† It is the Opinion of moſt Interpreters, that, whenever God is ſaid to ſpeak to *Moſes*, to *Joſhua*, or any other pious Man in the Old Teſtament, he does not do it of himſelf, but by an Angel only. This perhaps might be his moſt common Way of communicating himſelf; but there want not ſeveral Inſtances in Scripture, where God himſelf, or (as others will have it) the eternal *Logos*, converſes with his Servants. And this he may do, either by a *mental Locution*, wherein he objects to their Minds the expreſs Idea of what ſuch a Number of Words would convey; or by a *corporal Locution*, when he aſſumes an apparent Body, and Speech, in the ſame Manner that Men ſpeak. But in the Place before us, (whether it were an Angel, or God himſelf) he ſeems to have ſpoken to *Joſhua* out of the *Sanctuary*, from whence he had ſpoken to him, a little before *Moſes*'s Death, and gave him Encouragement to perform ſtrenuouſly what he is now putting upon him. *Deut.* xxxi. 14, 23.

* *Jericho* was a City of *Canaan*, which afterwards fell to the *Lot* of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, about ſeven Leagues diſtant from *Jeruſalem*, and two from *Jordan*. *Moſes* calls it likewiſe the *City of Palm-Trees*, Deut. xxxiv. 3. becauſe there were great Numbers of them in the Plains of *Jericho*; and not only of Palm-Trees, but, as *Joſephus* tells us, (Antiq. Lib. iv. c. 5.) Balſam-Trees likewiſe, which produc'd the precious Liquor in ſuch high Eſteem among the Ancients. The Plain of *Jericho* was water'd with a Rivulet, which was formerly ſalt and bitter, but was afterwards ſweeten'd by the Prophet *Eliſha*, 2 Kings ii. 21, 22. whereupon the adjacent Country, which was water'd by it, became not only one of the moſt agreeable, but moſt fertile Spots in all that Country. As to the City itſelf, after it was deſtroy'd by *Joſhua*, it was, in the Days of *Ahab*, King of *Iſrael*, rebuilt by *Hiel* the *Bethelite*, 1 Kings xvi. 34. and, in the Times of the laſt Kings of *Judea*, yielded to none, except *Jeruſalem*. For it was adorn'd with a Royal Palace, wherein *Herod the Great* died; with a *Hippodromus*, or Place where the *Jewiſh* Nobility learn'd to ride the Great-Horſe, and other Arts of *Chivalry*; with an *Amphitheatre*, and other magnificent Buildings; but, during the Siege of *Jeruſalem*, the Treachery of its Inhabitants provok'd the *Romans* to deſtroy it. After the Siege was over, there was another City built, but not upon the ſame Place, where the two former ſtood; for the Ruins of them are ſeen to this Day. Of what Account and Bigneſs it was, we have no certain Information; but ſome later Travellers inform us, that, at preſent, it is no more, than a poor, naſty Village of the *Arabs*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old and New Teſtament, and *Maundrell*'s Journey from *Aleppo*.

* *Jordan* is ſuppos'd to derive its Name from the *Hebrew* Word *Jor*, which ſignifies a *Spring*, and *Dan*, which is a ſmall Town, and not far from the Fountain-Head of this River. It is certainly a River of very great Note in Holy Writ, and of it the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian gives us the following Account: "The Head of this River has been "thought to be *Panion*; but, in Truth, it paſſes hither under Ground, and the Source of it is *Phiala*, an hundred "and twenty Furlongs from *Cæſarea Philippi*, a little on the Right-Hand, and not much out of the Way to *Tra-* "*chonis*.——— From the Cave of *Panion*, it croſſes the Bogs and Fens of the Lake *Semechon*, and, after a Courſe "of an hundred and twenty Furlongs further, paſſes under the City of *Julias*, (or *Bethſaida*) and ſo over the Lake "*Geneſareth*, or *Tiberias*, and then, running a long Way through a Wilderneſs or Deſart, it empties itſelf into the "Lake *Aſphaltites*, or the *Dead Sea*." Now, ſince the Cave *Panion* lies at the Foot of Mount *Lebanos*, and the Lake *Aſphaltites* reaches to the very Extremity of the *South* of *Judea*, the River *Jordan* muſt extend its Courſe quite from the *northern* to the *ſouthern* Boundary of the *Holy Land*. But the Largeneſs of this River is far from being equal to its Extent. It may be ſaid indeed to have two Banks, whereof the firſt and outermoſt is that, to which the River does, or at leaſt antiently did, overflow at ſome Seaſons of the Year; but at preſent (whether the Rapidity of the Current has worn its Channel deeper, or its Waters are directed ſome other Way) ſo it is, that it ſeems to have forgot its antient Greatneſs: "For we (ſays Mr *Maundrell*) could diſcern no Sign or Probability of ſuch Overflowing, tho' "we were there on the 30th of *March*, which is the proper Time for its Inundations. Nay, ſo far was the River "from overflowing, that it ran at leaſt two Yards below the Brink of its Channel. After you have deſcended the "*outermoſt* Bank, *continues he*, you go about a Furlong upon the level Strand, before you come to the *immediate* "Bank of the River, which is ſo beſet with Buſhes and Trees, ſuch as *Tamariſks*, *Willows*, *Oleanders*, &c. that you "can ſee no Water, until you have made your Way through them. In this Cover of the Banks, Lions, and other "wild Creatures, are ſaid to hide themſelves in Summer, but, upon the Inundation of the River, they are forc'd to "diſlodge." To which the Prophet ſeems to allude in theſe Words, *He ſhall come up like a Lion from the Swelling of* Jordan, Jer. xlix. 19. The River, in ſhort, ſeems much diminiſh'd from its antient Grandeur; for it is not above twenty Yards in Breadth, tho' deep and muddy, and a little too rapid to ſwim over. *Wells* and *Maundrell*, ibid.

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People Notice, that, within three Days, they were to paſs the *Jordan*, in order to take Poſſeſſion of the Promis'd Land, and were therefore † to provide themſelves with Victuals for their March. * The Spies, who were ſent upon this hazardous Expedition, got ſafe into the City, and took up their Lodgings in a *Publick-Houſe*, that was kept by a Widow-woman, whoſe Name was *Rahab*. But they had not been long there, before Intelligence was brought to the King, ſo that he order'd the Gates to be ſhut, and ſearch to be made for the Men: But their *Hoſteſs*, having had ſome Notice of it, hid them under ſome *hempen* Stocks, which lay drying * upon the Roof of her Houſe, and, when the King's Officers came, ſhe told them, "That there had indeed "been two *Strangers* there, who had "made a ſhort Stay at her Houſe, but "that, a little before Sun-Set, they went "away, but might eaſily be overtaken, "becauſe they had not been long gone:" Whereupon they ſent out Meſſengers after them, as far as the Fords of *Jordan*, but in vain. Having thus eluded the King's Officers, *Rahab* goes up to the Spies, and

Who, being kindly entertain'd by Rahab, *return to the Camp in Safety.*

tells them, "That the was very confident "their God (who was the only true God, "both in Heaven and Earth) had deli-"ver'd that Country into their Hands; "that the Actions, which he had done "for them, in making all Oppoſition fall "before them, had ſtruck a *panick* Fear "into all its Inhabitants; and that there-"fore, as ſhe was confident that this "would be the Event, and had, in this "Inſtance, ſhewn them uncommon Kind-"neſs, her only Requeſt was, that, when "they came againſt the City, they would, "in Return, ſpare her's and her Family's "Lives; for which ſhe deſir'd of them "ſome Aſſurance." An Offer ſo generous and ſo unexpected, join'd with ſo liberal a Confeſſion, could not but engage the two Spies to a Compliance with what ſhe requeſted; and therefore they promis'd, and ſolemnly ſwore to her, that, whenever they became Maſters of the City, not only ſhe, and her Family, but every one elſe, that was found in her Houſe, ſhould be exempted from the common Ruin.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

THE Gates were ſo cloſely ſhut and guarded, that there was no Poſſibility for making their Eſcape that Way; but *Rahab*'s

† The *Iſraelites* uſual Food, while they ſojourn'd in the Wilderneſs, was *Manna*; but, as they approach'd the *Promis'd Land*, where they might have Proviſion in an ordinary Way, that miraculous Bread did perhaps *gradually* decreaſe; and, in the Space of a few Days after this, was totally withdrawn. They were now in the Countries of *Sihon* and *Og*, which they had lately conquer'd, and the *Victuals*, which they were commanded to provide themſelves with, were ſuch, as their new Conqueſt afforded: For being, after three Days (Joſh. iii. 1.) to remove very early in the Morning, they might not perhaps have had Time to gather a ſufficient Quantity of *Manna*, and to bake it, before they were oblig'd to march. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* The *Eaſtern* Writers tell us, that theſe *Spies* (whom they make to be *Caleb* and *Phineas*) were valiant and religious Men, and in the Prime of their Youth; that, to paſs unobſerv'd, they chang'd their Habits, as if they had come from a diſtant Country, and, if any one aſk'd them any Queſtions, their Reply was to this Effect: We are "People from the *Eaſt*, and our Companions have heard of this powerful People, who were forty Years in the "Wilderneſs, without either Guide or Proviſion; and it was reported to us, that they had a God, whom they call'd "*the King of Heaven and Earth*, and who (as they ſay) hath given them both your and our Country. Our Princi-"pals have therefore ſent us to find out the Truth hereof, and to report it to them.——— We have likewiſe heard "of their *Captain*, whom they call *Joſhua*, the Son of *Nun*, who put the *Amalekites* to flight, who deſtroy'd *Sihon* "and *Og*, the Kings of *Midian* and *Moab*. Woe therefore be to us, and you, and all that flee to us for Shelter! "They are a People who pity none, leave none alive, drive all out of their Country, and make Peace with none. "We are all accounted by them Infidels, Profane, Proud, and Rebellious. Whoever of us or you therefore, that in-"tend to take care of themſelves, let them take their Families, and be gone, leſt they repent of their Stay, when it "is too late." By this Means they impos'd upon the People; and (as *Joſephus* informs us) went whither they would, and ſaw whatever they had a Mind to, without any Stop or Queſtion. They took a View of the Walls, the Gates, the Ramparts, and paſs'd the whole Day for Men of Curioſity only, without any Deſign. So that if any Credit may be given to this Account, it was but juſt, that they, who thus impos'd upon the *Canaanites*, ſhou'd, in the ſame Manner, be impos'd upon by the *Gibeonites*. Chronicon Samaritanum Arabicè Scriptum, p. 65. and *Joſephus*'s Antiq. lib. v. c. 1.

* The Roofs of Houſes were then very flat, and, having probably Battlements round them to ſecure People from falling off, as the Manner of Building was afterwards among the *Jews*, Deut. xxii. 8.) were made uſe of for Places to walk, or, at any Time, to lay any Kind of Goods upon.

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Rahab's Houſe being happily ſituated upon the City-Wall, as ſoon as it was conveniently dark, ſhe firſt charg'd them to make to the neighbouring Mountains, where they might keep themſelves conceal'd, until the Meſſengers were return'd, and then let them down by a ſilken Cord from one of her Windows, which fac'd the Country. But before they parted, they agreed, that this ſame Cord, hung out at her Window, ſhould be the Token between them; and therefore they deſir'd, that whoever ſhe was minded to ſave, might, when their Army approach'd the City, be kept within Doors. The Spies, having thus luckily eſcap'd, took *Rahab*'s Advice, and conceal'd themſelves in the Mountains, until thoſe, who were ſent out to purſue them, were return'd to the City, and then they made the beſt of their Way to the Camp; where they inform'd *Joſhua* of their whole Adventure, and, withal, gave him to underſtand, that the general Conſternation, which they found the People in, was to them a ſure Omen, that God Almighty intended to crown their Armies with Succeſs.

The Iſraelites *paſs the River* Jordan.

Pleas'd with this News, *Joſhua* gave Orders for the Army to decamp; but before he did that, he reminded the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the Half-Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, of the Promiſe they had made *Moſes* to aſſiſt their Brethren in the Conqueſt of *Canaan*; † which they readily conſented to do, and, not only in that but in every Thing elſe, he commanded them to do, promis'd to obey him with the ſame Chearfulneſs, that they had done *Moſes*: So that forty Thouſand of them decamp'd with him, and fell down to the Banks of the *Jordan*.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

It was now in the Time of the Barley-Harveſt, (which in theſe hot Countries falls early in the Spring) when, by reaſon of haſty Rain, and the Melting of the Snow upon Mount *Lebanon*, the River is generally full of Water, and ſometimes overflows its Banks: And, as ſoon as the Army was come within a ſmall Diſtance of the Place, where it was intended they ſhould croſs, *Joſhua* ſent and communicated to every Tribe the Order, that was to be obſerv'd in this ſolemn March. The Prieſts, bearing the Ark, were to begin the Proceſſion; each Tribe, in the Order, in which they us'd to march, were to follow. When the Prieſts were got into the Middle of the Channel, there they were to ſtand ſtill, until the whole Multitude was got ſafe to the other Shore; and, that this wonderful Paſſage might be more regarded, they were all enjoin'd to *ſanctify themſelves*, by waſhing their Cloaths, avoiding all Impurities, and abſtaining from *matrimonial* Intercourſe the Night before.

Before they croſs'd the River, *Joſhua*, by God's Direction, appointed twelve Men, out of every Tribe one, to chuſe twelve Stones (according to the Number of their Tribes) in the midſt of the Channel, where the Prieſts, with the Ark, were order'd to ſtand, and † there to ſet them up, (that they might be ſeen from each Side of the River, when the Waters were abated) as a Monument of this great Miracle; and to bring twelve more aſhore with them for the like Purpoſe.

With theſe Orders and Inſtructions the Army ſet forward. The Prieſts, with the Ark, led the *Van*; and, as ſoon as they touch'd the River with their Feet, the

† The two Tribes and an half had the Countries, which had lately been conquer'd, and were now given to them in Poſſeſſion, to preſerve againſt the Attempts of the Nations, from whom they had taken them; and can hardly be ſuppos'd to go, one and all, along with their Brethren to the Conqueſt of their Countries, which lay on the other Side of the River *Jordan*. In the laſt Muſter of the Army, they conſiſted of above an hundred Thouſand able Soldiers; and we can hardly ſuppoſe, that, at this Time, their Number was decreas'd. The forty Thouſand, that went over *Jordan*, were but a Part of them, and the reſt were left behind to guard their new Conqueſt againſt the vanquiſh'd Nations, that had abundant Reaſon to become their Enemies. *Saurin*, Vol. III. Diſſertation 1.

† It has been a Cuſtom in all Nations to erect Monuments of Stone, in order to preſerve the Memory of Covenants, Victories, and other great Tranſactions; and though there was no Inſcription upon *theſe* Stones, yet the Number of them, and the Place where they lay (which was not at all ſtony) was ſufficient to ſignify ſome memorable Thing, which Poſterity would not fail to hand down from one Generation to another. *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Joſhua* iv 7.

M. Schetz del

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And the Pursuers sought the Spyes throughout all the way, but found them not. Joshua Ch: II. Ver: 22 —

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[illegible]

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the Stream divided. The Waters *above* went back, and roſe up on Heaps, as far as the City † *Adam*; whilſt thoſe, that were *below*, continuing their Courſe towards the *Dead-Sea*, open'd a Paſſage of above 16 or 18 Miles, for the *Iſraelites* to croſs over, and, all the Time, that they were thus croſſing, the Prieſts with the Ark ſtood in the Middle of the Channel, till every Thing was done, that *Joſhua* commanded; and then, upon their coming out of it, the River return'd to its wonted Courſe.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

BY this miraculous Paſſage, *Joſhua*, having gain'd the Plains of *Jericho*, encamp'd in a †Place, which was afterwards call'd *Gilgal*; and, while the whole Country lay under a great Terror and Conſternation, God commanded † the Rite of *Circumciſion*, which for the Space of almoſt forty Years had been intermitted, to be renew'd, that the People might be qualify'd to partake of the enſuing *Paſſover*. This was the third Time of their celebrating that *Feſtival:* The *firſt* was at their Departure out of *Egypt*; the *ſecond* at their

† *Adam*, or *Adom*, is a Place ſituate on the Banks of the River *Jordan*, towards the *South* of the Sea of *Cinnereth*, or the Sea of *Galilee*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament.

† *Gilgal*, the Place where the *Iſraelites* encamp'd for ſome Time, after their Paſſage over the River *Jordan*, was ſo call'd, becauſe here the Rite of Circumciſion, which had long been diſus'd, was renew'd: Whereupon *the Lord ſaid unto* Joſhua, *this Day have I roll'd away the Reproach of* Egypt *(i. e.* Uncircumciſion) *from off you*, wherefore *the Name of the Place is call'd Gilgal* (i. e. rolling) *unto this Day*, Joſh. v. 9. From this Expreſſion the Place receiv'd its Name, and if we look into its Situation, we ſhall find, that, as the *Iſraelites* paſs'd over *Jordan right againſt* Jericho, *Joſh.* iii. 16. and encamp'd in *Gilgal, in the Eaſt Border of* Jericho, 'tis plain, that *Gilgal* muſt be ſituated between *Jordan* and *Jericho*; and therefore, ſince *Joſephus* tells us, that *Jericho* was ſixty Furlongs diſtant from *Jordan*, and the Camp of *Gilgal* was fifty Furlongs from the ſame River; it hence follows that *Gilgal* was ten Furlongs *(i. e.* about a Mile and a Quarter) from *Jericho* Eaſtward. But as ſome learn'd Men have obſerv'd, that five of the Furlongs, us'd by *Joſephus*, make up an *Italian* Mile, ſo the Diſtance between *Gilgal* and *Jericho* will be juſt two Miles; which exactly agrees with the Teſtimony of St *Jerom*, who makes it two Miles diſtant from *Jericho*, and a Place held in great Veneration by the Inhabitants of the Country, in his Days. *Wells*'s Geography, Vol. II. c. 4.

† The Command which God gives *Joſhua*, concerning the Rite of Circumciſion, is this ——— *Make thee ſharp Knives, and circumciſe the Children of* Iſrael, *the ſecond Time*, Joſh. v. 2. And, after the Rite was perform'd, God ſaid, *This Day have I rolled away the Reproach of* Egypt, *from off you*, ver. 9. Both of which Paſſages have given no ſmall Trouble to Commentators. The *ſharp Knives* are allow'd to be (what our *marginal* Notes call them) *Knives of Flint*, which Stones could not but be plentiful in the Mountains of *Arabia*, and, when made very ſharp, were the Knives commonly made uſe of in the *Eaſtern* Countries: But St *Jerom* himſelf (as great an *Hebraiſt* as he was) could not find out, what was this Circumciſion, which was to paſs upon the *Iſraelites* the *ſecond Time*. Some of the *Jews*, from theſe Words of *Jeremiah*, *I will puniſh the Circumciſed, that has a Foreſkin*, Chap. ix. 25. have undertaken to prove, that it was poſſible to bring the *Foreſkin* again by Art, which the *Iſraelites* had done, during their Abode in the Wilderneſs, and, for this Reaſon, were order'd to be *circumcis'd* afreſh; and thoſe Chriſtians, who have embrac'd this Notion, pretend to ſupport it by the Words of St *Paul*, *If any Man is called, being circumcis'd,* μὴ ἐπισπάσθω, *let him not get a Foreſkin again*, or, as we render it, *let him not become uncircumcis'd*. But whether the Recovery of a *Prepuce* be a Thing probable or not, 'tis certain, that all the Difficulty of the Words ariſes from miſunderſtanding the Idiom of the *Original*, and may eaſily be remov'd, if they were tranſlated, or paraphras'd thus, ——— *Let the Ceremony of Circumciſion, which has been ſo long diſcontinued, be renewed, as it was once heretofore.* While the *Iſraelites* liv'd in *Egypt*, we do not read of any Neglect of this Rite of Circumciſion among them; but, while they abode in the Wilderneſs, there are ſeveral Reaſons, that might oblige them to omit it, until they arriv'd in the promis'd Land, when they were to renew the Ordinance of the Paſſover, and, previous to that, were all to be circumcis'd; becauſe no uncircumcis'd Perſon, or any one who had a Son, or a Man-Servant in his Houſe uncircumcis'd, was capable of being admitted to it, *Exod.* xii. 43. 2d, *The rolling away the Reproach of* Egypt is ſuppos'd, by ſome, to relate to the *Reproaches*, which the *Egyptians* us'd to caſt upon the *Iſraelites*, viz. that the *Egyptians*, ſeeing the *Iſraelites* wander ſo long in the Wilderneſs, reproach'd and flouted them as if they were brought to be deſtroy'd there, and not conducted into the promis'd Land; from which Reproaches God now deliver'd them, when, by enjoining *Circumciſion*, he gave them Aſſurance, that they ſhould ſhortly enjoy *the Country*, which no uncircumcis'd Perſon might inherit. Our learned *Spencer* thinks the *Reproach of* Egypt to be the *Slavery*, to which they had long been there ſubject, but were now fully declar'd a *free* People, by receiving a Mark of the Seed of *Abraham*, and being made Heirs of the promis'd Land. But the moſt common Opinion is, that, by the *Reproach of* Egypt, is meant nothing elſe but *Uncircumciſion*, with which the *Iſraelites* always upbraided other People, and particularly the *Egyptians*, with whom they had liv'd ſo long, and were beſt acquainted; and, admitting this to be the true (as it is the moſt unconſtrain'd) Senſe, this Paſſage is a plain Proof, that the *Iſraelites* could not learn the Rite of Circumciſion from the *Egyptians*, (as ſome pretend) but that the *Egyptians*, contrary-wiſe, muſt have had it from them. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 7. *Spencer* de Leg. Heb. Lib. i. c. 4. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii.

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their Erection of the Tabernacle, at the Foot of Mount *Sinai*; and *now*, that they were arriv'd in a Country, wherein there was a ſufficient Proviſion of Corn for *unleaven'd Bread*, God inſiſted upon the Obſervance of his Ordinances: He was minded indeed, that all Things now ſhould go on in their *regular* Way; and therefore, for the future, he left them to the Proviſion, which this Land of Plenty afforded them, and ceas'd to ſupply them any longer with *Manna*.

Take and ſack Jericho.

GILGAL was much about two Miles from *Jericho*, and therefore *Joſhua* might poſſibly go out alone to *reconnoitre* the City, and to think of the propereſt Way of beſieging it; when, all on a ſudden, there † appear'd to him a Perſon cloath'd in Armour, and ſtanding at ſome Diſtance, with a drawn Sword in his Hand. Undaunted at this unuſual Sight, *Joſhua* advances to him, and, having demanded of what Party he was, the Viſion reply'd, that he was for the *Hoſt of Iſrael*, whoſe Captain and Guardian he was; and, as *Joſhua*, in humble Adoration, was fallen proſtrate before him, he order'd him (in the Manner he had done *Moſes* at the burning Buſh) to looſe his Sandals from off his Feet, and then proceeded to inſtruct him in what Form he would have the Siege carried on, that the *Canaanites* might perceive, that it was ſomething more than *the Arm of Fleſh*, that fought againſt them.

The Form of the Siege was this:—— All the Army was to march round the City, with ſeven Prieſts before the Ark, having in their Hands Trumpets, made of Rams-Horns, ſix Days ſucceſſively. On the *ſeventh*, after the Army had gone round the City ſeven Times, upon Signal given, the Prieſts were to blow a long Blaſt with their Trumpets, and the People on a ſudden ſet up a loud Shout; at which Inſtant the Walls of the City ſhould fall ſo flat to the Ground, that they might directly walk into it without any Let or Obſtruction. Theſe Orders were put in Execution; and accordingly on the ſeventh Day, the Walls fell, and the *Iſraelites* enter'd. They put every one, Men, Women, and Children, nay the very Beaſts, to the Sword, and ſpar'd no living Creature, but *Rahab* only, and ſuch Relations, as ſhe had taken under the Protection of her Roof, according to the Stipulation, which he had made with her. For *Joſhua* had given the two Spies a ſtrict Charge before-hand, that, when the Town was going to be ſack'd, they ſhould repair to her Houſe, and convey every Thing ſafe out, that belong'd to her; which accordingly they did, and then the whole Army fell on, and ſet Fire to the City, and deſtroy'd every Thing in it, except the Silver, and Gold, and ſuch Veſſels of Braſs and Iron, as were to be put into the *Treaſury of the Houſe of the Lord*, as they had done once before *(a)* in a Caſe of the like Nature: And, that it might never be built again, *Joſhua* † denounc'd a *prophetick* Imprecation

From Joſh. i. to the End.

† Who this Perſon was, that appear'd to *Joſhua*, is not ſo well agreed among Commentators. Some are of Opinion that it was an Angel, who, becauſe the *Hebrew* calls him *Gebir*, is ſuppos'd to be *Gabriel*; but there are ſeveral Reaſons, in this very Account of this Apparition, which denote him to be a divine, and not a created Being. For, in the firſt Place, beſides his aſſuming the Title of *the Captain of the Hoſt of the Lord*, (an Image under which God himſelf is frequently repreſented in Scripture) *Joſhua*'s calling him *Jehovah*, or the *Lord*, a Name which neither *Joſhua* ſhould have given, nor he accepted of, had he been no more than an Angel; his falling down, and worſhipping him, which he durſt not have done, (ſince God alone is to be *ador'd)* nor would the other have permitted, but rather have reprov'd him, as we find one of them did St *John*, Rev. xxii. 10. are the ſureſt Evidence of the Divinity of his Perſon. For, when inſtead of reproving him for doing him too much Honour, we find him commanding him to do him more, by requiring him to looſe *his Shoes from his Feet*, inſiſting upon the higheſt Acknowledgment of a divine Preſence, that was us'd among the *Eaſtern* Nations, we cannot but think ourſelves oblig'd (with a learn'd *Rabbin)* freely to confeſs, *that this Angel, who ſuffer'd himſelf to be worſhipp'd, and by whoſe Preſence the Place where he appear'd was ſanctified, ſo that* Joſhua *was commanded to* put off his Shoes, *no doubt was the very ſame, whom all the Angels of Heaven do worſhip. Job. à Cech.* upon the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrim*, Vol. III. Diſſertation II.

(a) Numb. xxxi. 22, 23.

† The Words of *Joſhua*'s Execration are theſe;——*Curſed be the Man before the Lord, that raiſeth up and buildeth this City* Jericho; *he ſhall lay the Foundation thereof in his Firſt-born, and in his youngeſt Son ſhall be ſet up the Gates of it,*

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Imprecation on the Man, *(viz.* that it ſhould occaſion the utter Ruin of his Family) that ſhould attempt it.

The Death of Achan *for purloining Part of the Booty.*

† *AI* was a little City, about twelve Miles diſtant from *Jericho*; and as *Joſhua* knew, that it was neither populous, nor well-defended, he detach'd a ſmall Body, of three Thouſand Men only, to go, and attack it. But, contrary to their Expectation, the Inhabitants of the Place ſally'd out upon them, and, having ſlain ſome few, put the reſt to flight, and purſu'd them as far as their own Camp. This Defeat (how ſmall ſoever) ſtruck ſuch a Damp upon the People's Courage, that * *Joſhua* was forc'd to have Recourſe to God, who immediately anſwer'd (him by *Urim*, as is ſuppos'd) that his Commands had been *ſacrilegiouſly* infring'd, and therefore order'd him to have the Offender puniſh'd with Death, and directed him to a Method, how to diſcover who he was.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

BEFORE the Taking of *Jericho (b)* *Joſhua* had caution'd the People not to ſpare any Thing that was in it, but to burn and deſtroy all that came in their Way, except Silver, and Gold, and Braſs, and Iron, which were to be conſecrated to the Lord: But, notwithſtanding his ſtrict Charge againſt reſerving any Thing, that was either *devoted* to this general Deſtruction, or *conſecrated* to the Lord; a Man of the Tribe of *Judah*, whoſe Name was *Achan*, took ſome of the rich Plunder, and conceal'd it in his Tent. To find out the Perſon therefore, *Joſhua*, early next Morning, call'd all the Tribes together before

it, Joſh. vi. 26. "This Anathema (ſays *Maimonides*) was pronounc'd, that the Miracle of the Subverſion of *Jericho* "might be kept in perpetual Memory; for whoſoever ſaw the Walls ſunk deep into the Earth *(as he underſtands it)* "would clearly diſcern, that this was not the Form of a Building deſtroy'd by Men, but *miraculouſly* thrown down by "God." *Hiel* however, in the Reign of *Ahab*, either not remembering, or not believing this Denunciation, was ſo taken with the Beauty of its *Situation*, that he rebuilt *Jericho*, and (as the ſacred Hiſtory informs us) *laid the Foundation thereof in* Abiram, *his Firſt-born, and ſet up the Gates thereof in his youngeſt Son* Segub, *according to the Word of the Lord, which he ſpake by* Joſhua, *the Son of* Nun, 1 Kings xvi. 34. However, after that *Hiel* had ventur'd to rebuild it, no Scruple was made of inhabiting it; for it afterwards became famous upon many Accounts. Here the *Prophets* ſweeten'd the Waters of the Spring that ſupply'd it, and the neighbouring Countries: Here *Herod* built a ſumptuous Palace: It was the Dwelling-Place of *Zaccheus*; and was honour'd with the Preſence of *Chriſt*, who vouchſaf'd likewiſe to work ſome Miracles here. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 7.

† We have this Place mention'd in the Hiſtory of *Abraham*, who, both before, and after his going into *Egypt*, pitch'd his Tent between *Bethel* and *Ai*, or *Hai*, as it was then call'd; and, from both *Gen.* xii. 8. and *Joſh.* vii. 2. it appears, that this City lay to the *Eaſt* of *Bethel*, about three Leagues from *Jericho*, and one from *Bethel*, as *Maſius* informs us; and the Reaſon why *Joſhua* ſent ſo ſmall a Detachment againſt it was, becauſe the Place in itſelf was neither ſtrong nor large. For, when it was taken, the Number of the Slain, both in it, and *Bethel*, which (as ſome think) was confederate with it, were *but twelve Thouſand, both of Men and Women*, Joſh. viii. 25. The Providence of God however was very viſible in ſending ſo ſmall a Party againſt *Ai:* For, if the Flight of three Thouſand Men put the *Iſraelites* into ſuch a Conſternation, as we read *Joſh.* vii. 5, 6. what a Condition would they have been in, if all the People had been diſcomfitted, as doubtleſs it would have happen'd while the Guilt of *Achan*'s Sacrilege remain'd unpuniſh'd? *Wells*'s Geography, Vol. II. c. 4.

* The Spirits of the Army (as *Joſephus* tells us) were ſo ſunk upon this Diſorder, and caſt down into ſuch a Deſperation of better Things to come, that, after they had ſpent the whole Day in Faſting, Weeping, and Mourning, *Joſhua* addreſs'd himſelf, with a more than ordinary Importunity, to Almighty God, in Words to this Effect: "It is not any Temerity, O Lord, or Ambition of our own, that has brought us hither to make War upon this "People, but a pure Difference and Reſpect to the Perſuaſion of thy Servant *Moſes*, that has incited us to this "Undertaking, and not without a Warrant of many Signs and Miracles, to convince us, that he had Reaſon and "Authority on his Side, when he told us, that thou thyſelf hadſt promis'd us the Poſſeſſion of this Country, and "to give us Victory over all our Enemies. But what a Change is here, all on a ſudden, in the Diſappointment of "our Hopes, and in the Loſs of our Friends! As if either *Moſes*'s Prediction had not been of divine Inſpiration, "or, otherwiſe thy Promiſes and Purpoſes variable. If this be the Beginning of a War, we cannot but dread the "farther Progreſs of it, for fear that this Miſcarriage, upon the firſt Experiment, ſhould prove only the Earneſt of "greater Evils to come. But, Lord, thou alone, that art able to give us Relief, help us, and ſave us. Vouchſafe "unto us Comfort and Victory; and be graciouſly pleas'd to preſerve us from the Snare of deſpairing for the future." *Jewiſh* Antiquities, Lib. v. c. 1.

(*b*) Joſh. vi. 18, 19.

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before the Tabernacle, where, † by caſting the Lot, firſt upon the Tribes, and ſo proceeding from Tribe to Family, from Family to Houſhold, and from Houſhold to particular Perſons, the *Criminal* was, at laſt, found to be *Achan*; who, upon *Joſhua*'s Admonition, confeſs'd the Fact, *viz.* that he had ſecreted * a royal Robe, two hundred Shekels of Silver, and a large Wedge of Gold; and when, upon Search, the Things were produc'd in the Preſence of all the People, they took him, and all his Family, his Cattle, his Tent, and all his Moveables, and carrying them to a neighbouring Valley, (which, from that Time, † in Alluſion to this Man's Name, was call'd the Valley of *Achar*) ‖ there they ſton'd him, and thoſe belonging to his Family, as Accomplices in his Crimes. Whatever Goods or Utenſils he had, theſe they conſum'd with Fire, and ſo rais'd a great Heap of Stones over all, that thereby they might perpetuate the Memory of the Crime, and deter others from the like Provocation. From Joſh. i. to the End.

The Taking and Sacking of Ai.

After this Execution of the divine Juſtice, God order'd *Joſhua* to attempt the Conqueſt of *Ai* once more, and promis'd him Succeſs; which might beſt be obtain'd, as he told him, by laying an *Ambuſcade* ſomewhere behind the City, towards *Bethel*. † Thirty Thouſand Men were

† Some *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that, in the Diſcovery of the guilty Perſon, there was no Uſe made of Lots at all, but that, all *Iſrael* being order'd to paſs by the High-Prieſt, who, on this Occaſion, had his *Pectoral* on, in which were the twelve Stones with the Names of the twelve Tribes engraven on them, when the Tribe, to which the guilty Perſon belong'd, was call'd, the Stone, in which was the Name of that Tribe, chang'd Colour, and turn'd black; and ſo it did, when the Family, the Houſhold, and the Perſon was call'd: But this is a mere Fiction. There is much more Probability in the Opinion of thoſe, who ſuppoſe, that, at firſt, twelve *Lots* or *Tickets* were put into one *Urn*, on each of which was written the Name of one of theſe twelve Tribes: That, when one of the twelve Tribes were found guilty, then were there as many Lots put in, as there were Families in that Tribe; after that, as many as there were Houſholders in that Family; and, at laſt, as many, as there were Heads in that Houſhold, until the *Criminal* was detected. But others will have it, that this was done by the High-Prieſt alone, who, by a divine Inſpiration, at that Time, was enabled, without any more to do, to declare who the culpable Perſon was. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, Vol. III. *Le Clerc*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries, on *Joſh.* vii.

* In the Original, this Robe is call'd a *Garment of Shinar*, i. e. of *Babylon*; and the general Opinion is, that the Richneſs and Excellency of it conſiſted not ſo much in the *Stuff*, whereof it was made, as in the Colour whereof it was dy'd, which moſt ſuppoſe to have been *Scarlet*, a Colour in high Eſteem among the Ancients, and for which the *Babylonians* were juſtly famous. *Bochart* however maintains, that the Colour of this Robe was *various*, and not all of one Sort; that the ſcarlet Colour the *Babylonians* firſt receiv'd from *Tyre*, but the *Party-colour*, whether ſo woven, or wrought with the Needle, was of their own Invention, for which he produces many Paſſages out of *Heathen* Authors. Such as,

Non ego prætulerim Babylonica picta ſurperbè
Texta, Semiramiâ quæ variantur Acu. Mart. Ep. Lib. viii.
Hæc mihi Memphitis Tellus dat Mumera, victa eſt
Pectine Niliaco jam Babylonis Acus. Ibid. Lib. xiv.

with many more Citations out of ſeveral other Writers. However this be, 'tis certain, that the Robe could not fail of being a very rich and ſplendid one, and therefore captivated either *Achan*'s Pride, or rather Covetouſneſs; ſince his Purpoſe ſeems to have been, not ſo much to wear it himſelf, as to ſell it for a large Price. *Bochart*'s Phaleg, Lib. i. c. 9. *Saurin*, Lib. iii. Diſſertation 3.

† Tho' his Name was primarily *Achan*, yet, ever after his Execution, he was call'd *Achar*, (ſo the *Syriack* Verſion, *Joſephus*, *Athanaſius*, *Baſil*, and others, mention'd by *Bochart*, name him) which ſignifies the *Troubler* of *Iſrael*. *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Joſh.* viii.

‖ Since the Law againſt Sacrilege condemns Tranſgreſſors to the Flames, and God commanded the Perſon here guilty to be burnt accordingly, *Joſh.* vii. 18. the *Jews* affirm, that *Achan* was actually burnt; and, whereas it is ſaid in the Text, that *he was ſtoned*, they think that this was done, not *judicially*, but *accidentally* by the People, who were ſo highly provok'd, that they could not forbear caſting Stones at him, as he was led to Execution. Vid. *Munſt.* in Joſh. vii.

† Some are of Opinion, that this Detachment of thirty Thouſand made up the whole Force, that was employ'd in this Expedition againſt *Ai*; and that, out of *theſe*, *five Thouſand* were ſent to lie in Ambuſh, that, at a convenient Time, they might ſet fire to the City: But this is ſo directly contrary to God's Command of *Joſhua's taking all the People of War with him*, which accordingly, in chap. viii. 3, 11, we are told he did, that there is no Foundation for it. And therefore it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the whole Body, deſign'd for the Ambuſcade, conſiſted of thirty Thouſand Men, and that the five Thouſand, mention'd in the 12th Verſe, was a ſmall Party, detach'd from theſe, in order to creep cloſer to the City, while the five and twenty Thouſand kept themſelves abſconded behind the Mountains, until a proper Signal was given, both from the City, when this ſmall Party had taken it, and from the grand Army, when they had repuls'd the Enemy, that then they might come out from their Ambuſh, and intercept them, as they were making their Flight. *Patrick*'s Commentary, on Joſh. viii.

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were therefore drawn out, and ſent away by Night upon this Expedition, with Inſtructions to enter the City, as ſoon as the *Signal* (which was to be a Spear, with a Banner upon it) was given them: And early next Morning, he himſelf march'd, with the Remainder of his Forces, againſt the City. As ſoon as the King of *Ai* perceiv'd him, he ſally'd haſtily out of the Town, with all his Troops, and all his People, and fell upon the *Iſraelites*, who, at the firſt Onſet, fled, as if they had been under ſome great Terror. But this was only a *Feint*, to draw the Enemy into the Plain: and therefore as ſoon as *Joſhua* ſaw, that, by this Stratagem, the City was pretty well empty'd, he gave the Signal to the Ambuſcade, which, finding it now defenceleſs, immediately enter'd, and ſet it on Fire.

BY the Aſcent of the Smoak, *Joſhua* diſcern'd that his Men had got Poſſeſſion of the Town, and therefore facing about, he began to charge the Enemy very briſkly; who, little expecting that the *Iſraelites* would rally, began now to think of retreating to the City; but, when they ſaw it all in Flames, and the Party, which had ſet it on Fire, iſſuing out, and juſt going to fall upon their Rear, they were ſo diſmay'd and diſpirited, that they had Power neither to fight nor fly: So that all the Army was cut to Pieces; the City was burnt, and made an Heap of Rubbiſh; every Soul in it, Man, Woman, and Child, were put to the Sword; and the King, who was taken Priſoner, was order'd to be hang'd upon a Gibbet till Sun-ſet, when he was taken down, thrown in at a Gate of the City, and a great Heap of Stones rais'd over him. From Joſh. i. to the End.

AFTER this Action was over, the Cattle, and all the Spoil of the City, was, by God's Appointment, given to the Soldiers; and, as *Joſhua* was *now* not far diſtant from the Mountains of *Gerizim* and *Ebal*, this reminded him of the Command, which *(c) Moſes* had given, about reading the Law, with the Bleſſings and Curſes thereunto annex'd, from thoſe two Mountains; which he not only order'd to be done, but had an Altar likewiſe erected, whereon not only Sacrifices were offer'd, to give God the Glory of all his Victories; but † an *Abridgment* of the Law, or ſome remarkable Part of it was likewiſe engraven, at the ſame Time that the *whole* of it was read in a large Aſſembly of all the Tribes.

JOSHUA's Succeſs againſt the two Towns of *Jericho* and *Ai*, and the terrible Slaughter, he had made among their Inhabitants, had * ſo alarm'd the Kings on that Side the *Jordan*, that they confederated together, and enter'd into League for their mutual Defence: But the *Gibeonites*, foreſeeing the Deſtruction that was haſtening upon them, endeavour'd by a Stratagem to gain a Peace with the *Iſraelites*, which they effected in this Manner. —— They choſe a certain Number of artful Men, who † were inſtructed to feign themſelves *Ambaſſadors* come from a far *The League craftily acquir'd by the* Gibeonites.

(c) Deut. xi. 29. and xxvii. 1, — 13.

† It is a Queſtion (as we ſaid before, page 489 in the Notes) among the Learned, what it was, that was written upon theſe Stones? But beſides other Conjectures already enumerated, ſome think it not unlikely to have been a Copy of the Covenant, by which the Children of *Iſrael* acknowledg'd, that they held the Land of *Canaan* of God, upon Condition, that they obſerv'd his Laws, to which they and their Poſterity had oblig'd themſelves; for this was the third Time, that the Covenant between God and his People was renew'd, and therefore the Contents of that Covenant might be very proper, at this Time, to be thus *monumentally* recorded. *Patrick* on Deut. xxvii. 3. and Joſh. viii. 32.

* The *Jews*, in the *Talmud*, tell us likewiſe, that a farther Cauſe of the *Gibeonites* Fear, was, the Inſcription, which they had met with upon Mount *Ebal*, where, among other Parts of the Law, which *Joſhua* (as they pretend) wrote upon Stones, they found the Orders, which both he and *Moſes* had receiv'd from God, utterly to extirpate all the Inhabitants of the Land of *Canaan*. *Saurin*, Lib. iii. Diſſertation 4.

† It is a Queſtion among the *Caſuiſts*, whether the *Gibeonites* could, with a good Conſcience, pretend that they were Foreigners, and tell a Lye to ſave their Lives? And to this *Puffendorf* (Droit de la Nature, Lib. iv c. 2.) thus replies: *The Artifice of the* Gibeonites, ſays he, *had nothing blameable in it, nor does it properly deſerve the Name of a Lye: For what Crime is there in any one's making Uſe of an innocent Fiction, in order to elude the Fury of an Enemy, that would deſtroy all before them? Nor did the* Iſraelites *indeed properly receive any Damage from this Impoſture: For what does any one loſe, in not ſhedding the Blood of another, when he has it in his Power to take from him all his Subſtance, after having*

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far diſtant Country, in order to obtain a League with the People of *Iſrael:* And, to gain Credit to this their Pretence, they dreſs'd themſelves in old Clothes, had old clouted Shoes on their Feet, carry'd dry muſty Bread in their Bags, and the Bottles, wherein they kept their Wine, were † all ſadly tarniſh'd and torn. In this Plight they came to the Camp at *Gilgal*, and, being introduc'd to *Joſhua*, they told him, "That the Fame of many Miracles, "which God had wrought for them in "the Land of *Egypt*, and the wonderful "Succeſſes, wherewith he had bleſs'd "their Arms againſt every *Power*, that "had oppos'd them in their coming to "that Place, and reach'd even their re-"mote and diſtant Country; for which "Reaſon their *States* and Rulers had ſent "them a *long* Way, that, by all Means "imaginable, they might obtain a Peace "with a People ſo renown'd all the "World over, and ſo favour'd and ho-"nour'd by God:" And then ſhewing their Cloaths, Shoes, and other Tokens of the long Journey they had taken, they ſolemnly aſſur'd them, that all theſe Things were quite new, when at firſt they ſet out from Home, and thence left them to judge how diſtant and remote their Country was.

This plauſible Story, confirm'd as they thought by ſo many Evidences, gain'd Credit with the *Iſraelites*, ſo that they enter'd into amicable Alliance with them; and the other took Care to have the Treaty immediately ratify'd, both by *Joſhua*, and all the Princes of the Congregation. In three Days Time the Impoſture was diſcover'd; and they, who pretended to come from a diſtant Country, were found to be near Neighbours, and ſome of thoſe very People, whom *Joſhua* was commiſſion'd to deſtroy: So that, when the Thing came to be rumour'd about, the People began to murmur againſt their Princes for their Indiſcretion, and were for having the League cancell'd; but, as it was confirm'd by a ſolemn Oath, this they could not do, without incurring the divine Diſpleaſure. And therefore, tho' they might not take away their Lives, they might nevertheleſs hold them in a State of Servitude, and, as long as they liv'd, make them uſeful Drudges, Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, and the like, which would both puniſh them much, and prove full as beneficial to the Commonwealth; and with this Apology the People were appeas'd. *Joſhua* however ſent for ſome of the Chief of the *Gibeonites*, and having expoſtulated the Cheat with them, (which they excus'd upon the Score of ſaving their own Lives) he told them what the Determination of the Princes was, *viz.* that they ſhould remain in a State of perpetual Bondage; which they receiv'd without any Manner of Murmuring, and humbly

From Joſh. i. to the End.

having ſo weaken'd and diſarm'd him, that he is no more able to rebel againſt him? But the Opinion of this great Man ſeems to be a little erroneous in this Caſe. Had the *Iſraelites* indeed been a Pack of common Murtherers, who, without any Commiſſion from Heaven, were carrying Blood and Deſolation into Countries, where they had no Right; or had the *Gibeonites* been ignorant, that a miraculous Providence conducted theſe Conquerors; the Fraud, which they here put upon them, might then be deem'd innocent: For there is no Law, that obliges us, under the Pretence of Sincerity, to ſubmit to ſuch Incendiaries, and mercileſs Uſurpers, as are for ſetting fire to our Cities, and putting us and our Families to the Edge of the Sword. But the Caſe of the *Gibeonites* was particular; and if, in other Things, they went contrary to Truth, in this they certainly adher'd to it, when they told *Joſhua*, *we are come, becauſe of the Name of the Lord thy God, for we have heard of the Fame of him, and all that he did in* Egypt, *and all that he did to the two Kings of the* Amorites, *that were beyond* Jordan, &c. Joſh. ix. 9, 10. The Idea, which they had conceiv'd of the God of *Iſrael*, ſhould have put them upon ſome other Expedient, than that of Lying and Deceit. They ſhould have inquir'd (as far as the obſcure Diſpenſation they were under would have permitted them) into the Cauſe of God's Severity againſt them. They ſhould have acknowledg'd, that it was their grievous Sins, which drew down this heavy Judgment upon their Nation; and, after they had repented thereof in Sackcloth and Aſhes, they ſhould have committed the reſt to *Providence*, never doubting, but that he, who had chang'd the very Courſe of Nature to puniſh the Guilty, would always find out ſome Means or other, to ſave the Penitent: But this they did not do, and therefore they were culpable. *Saurin*, Vol. III. Diſſertation 4.

† Theſe Bottles were not of Glaſs, or Clay, as thoſe in Uſe among us, but were made of Leather, in which they formerly (and even now in ſome Countries) kept their Wine.

A. M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1451, &c.

The Conqueſt of the Confederate Kings in the South, *and Sun and Moon's ſtanding ſtill.*

humbly acquieſc'd in whatever was thought proper to be impos'd upon them.

THE *confederate* Princes, hearing of this ſeparate Treaty, which the *Gibeonites* had made with *Iſrael*, were reſolv'd to be reveng'd of them for their Deſertion of the common Cauſe; and accordingly joining all their Forces together, they came and inveſted their Town. The *Gibeonites*, in this Diſtreſs, not daring to truſt to their own Strength, ſent an Expreſs to *Joſhua* for ſpeedy Help; who ſet out with all Expedition, and, by quick Marches, and the Favour of the Night, came upon the Enemy ſooner than they expected, and, early next Morning, fell upon them, and routed them. In this Expedition God had all along encourag'd *Joſhua*, and promis'd him Succeſs; and therefore, as the confederate Forces were endeavouring to eſcape, and ſave themſelves by Flight, he pour'd ſuch a Storm of Hail upon them, as deſtroy'd more, than what periſh'd by the Sword.

JOSHUA, on the other Hand, was very deſirous to make the moſt of this happy Opportunity; and therefore, in full Chace of Victory, he addreſs'd himſelf to God, that the Sun and Moon might ſtand ſtill, and ſo prolong the Day, until he had compleated his Victory which God was pleas'd to grant: So that this was the moſt memorable Day, that ever happen'd, wherein the *Almighty liſten'd to the Voice of a Man*, to change the Courſe of Nature, and ſtop the Motion of thoſe rolling *Orbs*.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

THE confederate Kings, being thus put to Flight, and either frighten'd at the Storm of Hail, or at the cloſe Purſuit of the Enemy, made to a Cave near † *Makkedah*, and there ran to hide themſelves: But *Joſhua*, having Intelligence of it, commanded the Cave to be block'd up, and a Guard to be ſet over it, and ſo continu'd his Purſuit, that he might cut off as many, as he poſſibly could, before they reach'd to their fortify'd Towns. In his Return, he order'd the Cave to be open'd, and the Kings to be brought forth; and, when Execution was done upon them, he caus'd their Bodies to be hang'd upon ſeveral Trees, until the Evening; when they were taken down, and caſt into the Cave, where they thought to have hid themſelves, ſo that the Place of their intended *Sanctuary* became their *Sepulchre*. After this ſignal Victory, *Joſhua* took all the *ſouthern* Parts of *Canaan*, which afterwards belong'd to the Tribes of *Judah*, *Simeon*, *Benjamin*, *Dan*, and *Ephraim*; and, having thus ended his ſecond Campaign, he return'd, with his Army, to the Camp at *Gilgal*.

The Conqueſt of the Confederate Kings in the North.

HERE he continu'd for ſome Time without entering upon any freſh Action, until ſeveral Princes of the *North* of *Canaan*, under *Jabin* King of *Hazor*, confederated together, and rais'd a vaſt Number of Forces which encamp'd not far from † the Waters of *Merom*; and * what made the

† It was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, about eight Miles diſtant from *Eleutheropolis*, which Place, tho' it is no where mention'd in the Scripture-Hiſtory, becauſe it was built after the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, is, nevertheleſs, frequently taken Notice of by *Euſebius* and *Jerom*, as a *Point*, from whence they meaſure the Diſtances of other Places. Its Name imports a *free City*, and was itſelf ſituate in the Tribe of *Judah*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II. c. 4.

† Theſe Waters are generally ſuppos'd, by learned Men, to be the Lake *Semechon*, which lies between the Head of the River *Jordan*, and the Lake of *Genneſareth*; ſince it is agreed on all Hands, that the City *Hazor*, where *Jabin* reign'd, was ſituate upon this Lake. But others think, that the Waters of *Merom*, or *Merome*, were ſomewhere about the Brook *Kiſhon*; ſince there is a Place of that Name mention'd in the Account of the Battle againſt *Siſera*, Judg. v. 21. And it is more rational to think, that the *confederate* Kings advanc'd as far as the Brook *Kiſhon*, and to a *Paſs*, which led into their Country, to hinder *Joſhua* from penetrating it, or even to attack him in the Country, where he himſelf lay encamp'd, than to imagine that they waited for him, in the Midſt of their own Country, leaving all *Galilee* at his Mercy, and the whole Tract, from the Brook *Kiſhon*, to the Lake *Semechon*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III. c. 5. *Reland*'s Paleſt. Lib. i. c. 40. and *Calmet* on Joſh. xi. 5.

* Their whole Army, according to *Joſephus*, was computed to amount to three hundred Thouſand Foot, ten Thouſand Horſe, and two Thouſand Chariots; and to oppoſe againſt theſe the *Iſraelites* had no Horſe in their Armies, becauſe God had interdicted them, (*Deut.* xvii. 16.) leſt a Traffick into *Egypt* for that Sort of Cattle ſhould be a Snare

A M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1451, &c.

the Army more formidable, was the great Number of Horſes, and * arm'd Chariots they had, whereas the *Iſraelites* were all on Foot. This however did not in the leaſt diſcourage *Joſhua*, who, in Purſuance of the Inſtructions which God had given him, immediately took the Field, march'd directly towards the Enemy, fell ſuddenly upon them, and put all (except thoſe, * that made their Eſcape into other Countries) to the Sword; ham-ſtrung their Horſes, and burnt their Chariots with Fire. *Jabin* had been the Head of the Confederacy againſt him, and therefore he kill'd him, and caus'd his City to be burnt to the Ground; but the other Cities, whoſe Inhabitants were ſlain in Battle, he left ſtanding, and gave the Plunder of them to the Soldiers. From Joſh. i. to the End.

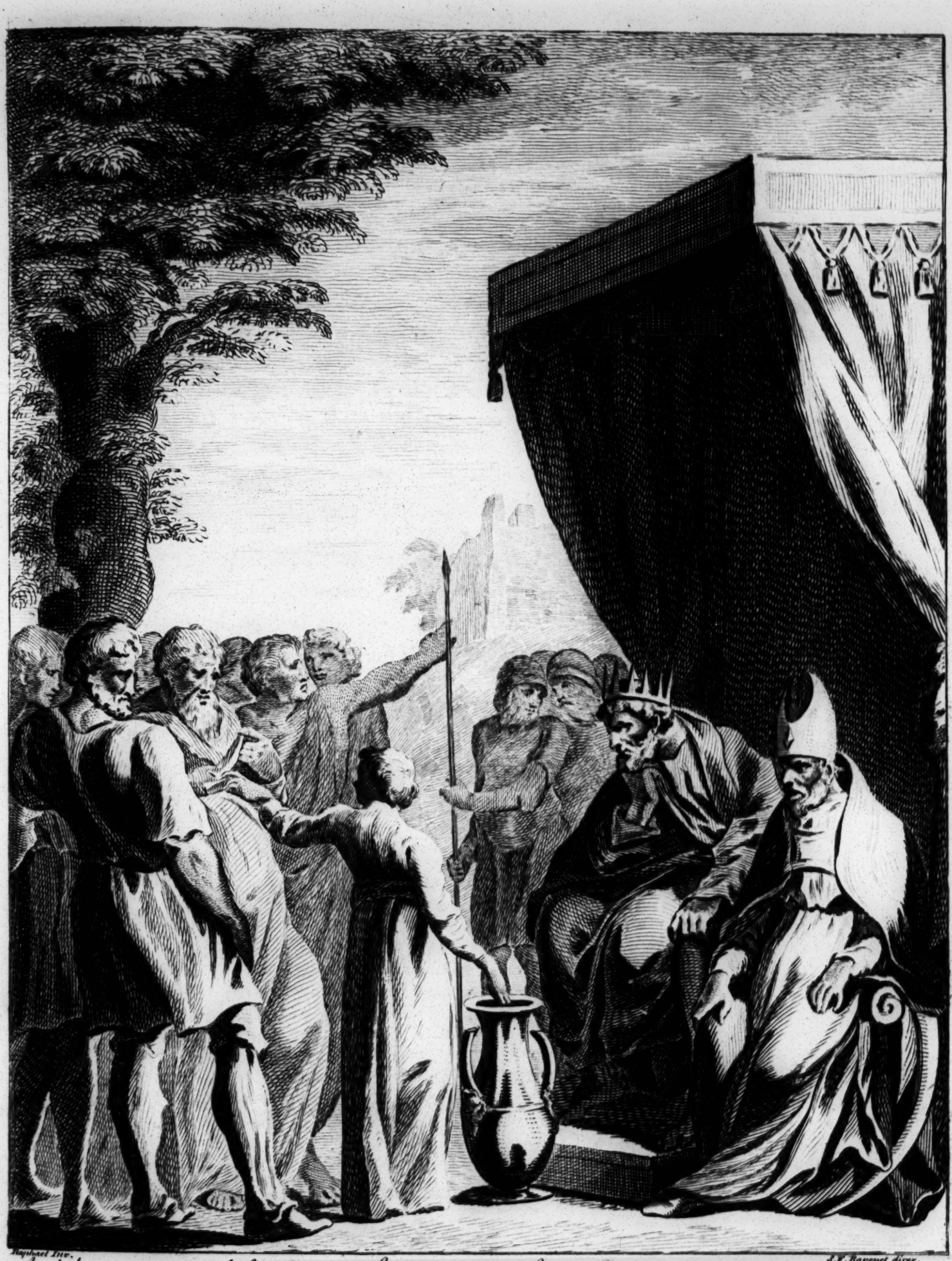
Thus *Joſhua* ſubdu'd all the Land of *Canaan* † by Degrees: He put its Inhabitants, its Kings, (who were one and thirty in Number) and all the *Giants*, that dwelt therein, except ſome few that ſtill remain'd among the *Philiſtines*, to the Sword; and having now extended his Conqueſt, as far as it was convenient at that Time, he began to think of dividing the Country, among *The* Diviſion *of the Land of* Canaan *among the Tribes.*

to entangle them in Idolatry; or leſt, having a Quantity thereof, they ſhould put their Confidence rather in them, than in the divine Aſſiſtance; for which Reaſon the Prophet denounces a *Woe upon them, that go down into* Egypt *for Help, and ſtay on Horſes, and truſt in Chariots, becauſe they are many, and in Horſemen, becauſe they are ſtrong, but they look not to the Holy One of* Iſrael, *neither ſeek they the Lord*, Iſa. xxxi. 1.

* The Chariots, which the ancient Hiſtorians uſually call *Currus Falciferi*, *Covini Falciferi*, *Quadrigæ Falcatæ*, ἅρματα δρεπανηφόρα, &c. are deſcrib'd after the following Manner: "The Beam, to which the Horſes were faſten'd, "was arm'd with Spikes with Iron-points, which projected forward: The Yokes of the Horſes had two cutting "Falchions of three Cubits length: The Axle-Trees had fix'd to them two Iron Spits, with Scythes at their Extremi-"ties; the Spokes of the Wheels were arm'd with *Javelins*, and the very *Fellows* with Scythes, which tore every "Thing they met with to pieces. The Axle-Tree was longer, and the Wheels ſtronger than uſual, that they might "be the better able to bear a Shock, and the Chariot leſs liable to be overturn'd." The *Charioteer*, who was cover'd all over with Armour, ſat in a Kind of Tower, made of very ſolid Wood, about Breaſt high, and ſometimes Men well arm'd were put into the Chariot, and fought from thence with Darts and Arrows. So that a dreadful Slaughter theſe Machines muſt at firſt have made, when they met with the Enemies Troops; but, in Time, when Men came to find out the Way of declining them, they did not do ſo much Execution, and were conſequently diſus'd. Vid. *Diodorus Siculus*. Lib. xvii. *Quint. Curtius*, Lib. iv. *Xenophon* Cyropæd. Lib. vi. *Lucretius*, De Rer. Nat. Lib. vi.

* Some *Jewiſh* Authors will needs have it, that, when *Joſhua* went into the Land of *Canaan*, he propos'd three Things to the Inhabitants thereof, either that they ſhould leave the Country, or come and make their Submiſſion, or take up Arms and fight him. But this is ſaid, in ſome Meaſure to excuſe the *Jewiſh* General, and to mollify the Rigour of his Proceedings. His expreſs Command from God was, to extirpate the ſeven Nations, without making any Treaty, or giving Quarter: And, tho' the *Gibeonites* by Guile had obtain'd a Kind of League with him, yet the Conditions, which he thereupon impos'd, were ſo very hard, that they could not but deter others from making the like Attempt. It is not therefore to be wonder'd, that the *Canaanites*, who ſaw themſelves drove to the Neceſſity either of Death or Slavery, (after they had try'd the Fate of their Arms ſo often to no Purpoſe) ſhould endeavour to make their Eſcape from a People every where victorious, and who were enjoin'd to be cruel and remorſeleſs by their very God, who had given them this Succeſs. Nor can we ſuppoſe, but that God who was minded to make Room for his own People, did (according to his Promiſe, *Exod.* xxiii. 27.) inject upon this Occaſion a Terror extraordinary into the Natives of the Country, and make them deſire to be gone: And when they were deſirous to be gone, they had the *Ports*, lying upon the *Mediterranean* Sea, very commodious for their Purpoſe. For, whether the Towns of *Tyre* and *Sidon* were at this Time built or no, 'tis certain that the Places, where theſe Towns ſtood, could not but be proper Harbours for Shipping; and, as the *Phœnicians* were ſtill Maſters of the Sea-Coaſts, by their Aſſiſtance the *Canaanites* might make their Eſcape into what Parts they pleas'd. The *Phœnicians*, much about this Time, did certainly ſend out a vaſt many Colonies; but, as it cannot be ſuppos'd, that ſo ſmall a Country ſhould produce ſuch Swarms, the greateſt Part of them are preſum'd to be the *Refugees* of *Canaan*, who made their Eſcape by Shipping to all the Coaſts, which lay round the *Mediterranean* and *Ægean Seas*, and even to other Parts of *Europe*, *Aſia*, and *Africa*, as the learned *Bochart* has given us a large Account in his *Canaan*, from Page 345, to Page 699. *Calmet*'s Diſſertation ſur le Pays, où ſe ſauverent les *Cananéens* chaſſez par Joſué.

† Theſe great Atchievements may be allow'd to have taken up ſome Years. The Hiſtory indeed informs us, that *Joſhua made War a long Time with all theſe Kings*, Joſh. xi. 18. And, from the Words of *Caleb*, wherein he gives *Joſhua* an Account of his Age, and that it was *five and forty Years*, ſince he was ſent a Spy to *Kadeſh-barnea*, there cannot be well leſs, than between ſix and ſeven Years, ſpent in this War; and why the War was ſo long continu'd, God himſelf aſſigns this Reaſon: ——— *I will not drive them out from before thee in one Year, leſt the Land become deſolate, and the Beaſts of the Field multiply againſt thee: By little and little will I drive them out from before thee, until thou be increaſed, and inherit the Land*, Exod. xxiii. 29, 30.



Raphael Inv. J.F. Ravenet direx.

And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua &c. Joshua Chap: XVII. Ver. 4. —
And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD: *and there Joshua divided the land unto the children of Israel according to their divisions.* Joshua Chap: XVIII. Verse 10. —

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among the Tribes, that were yet unprovided for, and of diſmiſſing the two Tribes and an half, who had accompany'd him in the Wars, but had their Habitations already ſettled by *Moſes*, on the *Eaſt* Side of the River *Jordan*. To this Purpoſe he appointed *Commiſſioners*, who ſhould take an exact Survey of the Country, and bring in a full Report without Delay; which when they had done, † the Country was divided into equal Portions, for which each Tribe (according *(d)* to God's Directions) caſt Lots: But, becauſe ſome Tribes were larger, and ſome Territories richer, than others, *Joſhua* and *Eleazar*, together with the Princes of the People, took care to adjuſt the Proportion of Land to the Largeneſs of the Tribe, and in ſubdividing that, to conſider the Number of each Family and Houſhold; purſuing exactly the Orders, which God gave to his Servant *Moſes*: *(e) Unto theſe the Land ſhall be divided for an Inheritance, according to the Number of Names. To many thou ſhalt give the more Inheritance; and to few thou ſhalt give the leſs Inheritance.——Notwithſtanding the Land ſhall be divided by Lot; ——according to Lot ſhall the Poſſeſſion thereof be divided among many, and few.*

The Diſmiſſion of the Reubenites, *&c. and a Miſunderſtanding rectify'd.*

HAVING thus divided the Country on the Weſt Side of the *Jordan*, *Joſhua* had a little Place given him for his own Habitation not far from *Shiloh*, where, after the Wars, the Tabernacle was ſet up, that he might have an Opportunity of conſulting God upon any Occaſion; and, after all Things were in this Manner regulated, he call'd together the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, who had ſerv'd for almoſt ſeven Years, as *Auxiliaries* in the Wars of *Canaan*, and gave them an honourable Diſmiſſion. " He " acknowledg'd, that they had duly exe- " cuted the Condition, which they pro- " mis'd to *Moſes*, in accompanying their " Brethren, and helping them to ſubdue " their Enemies, and commended their " Courage and Fidelity for ſo doing. He " exhorted them, now that they were " going to ſeparate from the Tabernacle, " never to neglect the Service of God, but " to bear always in Mind thoſe venerable " Laws, which he had given them by his " great Legiſlator. He adviſ'd them to " diſtribute a Share of the rich Booty, " they had taken from the *Canaanites*, " among their Brethren on the other Side " of *Jordan*; becauſe, tho' they had not " partaken of the Peril of the late War, " they had nevertheleſs done them great " Service, in protecting their Families " from the Inſults of their Enemies on " every Side:" And * with theſe Acknowledgments, and Exhortations, together with

From Joſh. i. to the End.

† Thoſe who are minded to know what particular Towns and Territories fell to each Tribe, had beſt conſult what *Joſephus*, in his *Jewiſh* Antiquities; *Jerom*, de Locis Hebraicis; *Reland*, de Urbibus & Vicis Paleſtinæ; *Maſius*, in Joſhuam; *Fuller*, in his *Piſgah*-Sight; *Raleigh*, in his Hiſtory, Part I. Lib. ii. *Wells*, in his Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II. *Patrick*, *Pool*, *Le-Clerc*, and ſeveral others, in their Commentaries, have ſaid upon this Subject. We ſhall make this one Remark, which *Maſius*, in his rich Commentary upon *Joſhua*, furniſhes us with, *viz.* that as *Jacob* and *Moſes*, at the Approach of their Deaths, foretold the very Soil and Situation of every particular Country, that ſhould fall to each Tribe; ſo, upon this Diviſion by Lots, it accordingly came to paſs. To the Tribe of *Judah*, there fell a Country, abounding with *Vines*, and Paſture-Grounds, Gen. xlix. 11. To that of *Aſhur*, one plenteous in *Oil*, *Iron*, and *Braſs*, Deut. xxxiii. 24, 25. To that of *Naphthali*, one extending from the *Weſt* to the *South* of *Judea*, Ibid. xxxiii. 23. To that of *Benjamin*, one, in which the Temple was afterwards built, Ibid. xxxiii. 12. To thoſe of *Zebulun* and *Iſſachar*, ſuch as had Plenty of *Sea-Ports*, Gen. xlix. 13. To thoſe of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, ſuch as were renown'd for their *precious Fruits*, Deut. xxxiii. 14. And to thoſe of *Simeon* and *Levi*, no particular Countries at all; for as much as the *former* had a Portion with *Judah*, and the other was interſpers'd among the ſeveral Tribes. Since therefore (as our Commentator reaſons) each particular Lot anſwer'd ſo exactly to each Prediction, it muſt needs be the Height of Inſolence or Stupidity, not to acknowledge the divine Inſpiration in theſe Predictions, and the divine Direction in theſe Lots.

(d) Joſh. xiv. 2. *(e)* Numb. xxvi. 53, &c.

* *Joſephus*, in the Speech, which he introduces *Joſhua* making to the *Reubenites*, &c. at their Parting, concludes with theſe Words: ——— " But, I pray ye, let no Diſtance of Place ſet Limits to our Friendſhip. The Interpo- " ſition of *Rivers* muſt never divide our Affections; for, on which Bank ſoever, we are all *Hebrews* ſtill. *Abraham* " was the common Father of us all, let our Abode be where it will. It was from one and the ſame God, that all " our Foreſathers receiv'd their Being; and that God we are all to worſhip, according to the Ordinances and Inſti- " tutions

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with many ſincere Wiſhes for their Proſperity and Welfare, * he ſent them away; but they had not been long gone, before a ſad Miſunderſtanding had like to have happen'd between them and the other Tribes.

Upon their Arrival on the other Side of *Jordan*, they erected an Altar near the Place, where they and their Brethren had miraculouſly paſs'd over, not for any religious Uſe, but as a *Memorial* to ſucceeding Generations, that, tho' they were parted by the River, yet they were of the ſame Extract and Religion, and held an equal Right to the *Tabernacle* at *Shiloh*, and to the Worſhip of God perform'd there, that the Inhabitants of the other Side had. But, whether thoſe on the other Side were miſinform'd, or miſapprehended their Intent, ſo it was, that they fell into a violent Rage againſt them, as *Apoſtates* from the true Religion; and immediately took up Arms for the Vindication of the Worſhip and Religion of their Forefathers, and to avenge the Cauſe of God upon the Heads and chief Authors of this Defection. But, before they proceeded to theſe Extremities, they were advis'd by their Rulers to ſuſpend the Execution of their Wrath, until they had ſent a Deputation to them in order to know the Reaſon of their building ſuch an Altar; which accordingly they did, and made choice of *Phineas*, the Son of *Eleazar*, with ten other Perſons of eminent Diſtinction, to go upon the Embaſſy. As ſoon as they were come into the Land † of *Gilead*, * they repreſented the great Surprize, that the reſt of the Tribes were in at their building this Altar; and told them very roundly, that they fear'd it portended a Defection into *Idolatry*. To diſſwade them therefore from *that*, they put them in mind of the Calamities, which God had formerly ſent upon them for their Worſhip of *Baal-peor*; and that, if ſo lately he had been ſo ſevere upon them for the Offence of one Man, *viz. Achan* only, what might not they expect, when two Tribes and an half were going to make a general Revolt? And, as they ſuſpected that the Abſence of the Tabernacle might give ſome Occaſion to this Innovation, they invited them to come, and live among them, where they might not want an Opportunity of ſerving God, according to the Cuſtom of their Anceſtors.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

Concern'd to hear the ill Opinion, which their Brethren had thus conceiv'd of

" tutions left us by *Moſes*. So long as we ſtand firm to that Way of Religion, we may be ſure of the Favour and " Protection of that God, for our Comfort; but, whenever you apoſtatize into an Hankering after *ſtrange Gods*, the " God of your Fathers will caſt you off." *Jewiſh* Antiquities, Lib. v. c. 1.

" The *Chronicon Samaritanum* (if we may believe what it reports, Page 92, 93.) tells us, that when *Joſhua* ſent the *Reubenites* away, he appointed *Nephiel* to be his *Deputy* on the other Side of *Jordan*; that he cloath'd him with a royal Robe, put a Crown on his Head, and made him ride on an Horſe of State, whilſt a Cryer went before him, proclaiming, *This is the King of the two Tribes and an Half, the Preſident of Juſtice, the Director of Affairs, and the General in the Camp: Let his Determination be concluſive. In all difficult Cauſes let him deſire an Anſwer from* Eleazar *the High-Prieſt; and, if any one ſhall contradict his Sentence, or withdraw from his Allegiance, it ſhall be lawful for any one to kill that Man, and the whole Congregation ſhall be blameleſs.*

† *Gilead*, which took its Name from *Gilead*, the Son of *Machir*, and Grandſon of *Manaſſeh*, is often put for the whole Country, that lies on the Eaſt Side of *Jordan*, which the Children of *Iſrael* took from the *Moabites* and *Midianites*, &c.

* *Joſephus* makes *Phineas* the Speaker upon this Occaſion, who delivers his Commiſſion in Words to this Effect: ——— " We are very ſenſible, that the Crime, charg'd upon you at preſent, is too heinous to be puniſh'd by " Words only; but we have not taken up Arms (Hand over Head) to execute a Vengeance according to the Degree " of the Iniquity: For it is out of Reſpect to our Allies, and in Hopes that ſecond and ſounder Thoughts may " bring you to better Reaſon, that we are engag'd upon this Embaſſy, and ſpeak in this Aſſembly. We do but " deſire to be ſincerely inform'd, upon what Motives, and with what Deſign you have now rais'd this *Altar*. If " you have done it out of any pious End, we have no Quarrel with you; but if you are gone over to a falſe Worſhip, " it is for our God, and our Religion, that we muſt draw our Swords againſt you. We ſpeak our Fears; for we " cannot think it credible yet, that a People, ſo well inſtructed in the Will, and in the Laws of God, our Friends " and Allies, that we have but juſt now parted with; a People, newly eſtabliſh'd in the Lot of a plentiful Poſſeſſion by " God's ſpecial Grace and Providence; we cannot, I ſay, believe you to be ſo inſenſible and ungrateful, as to abandon " the holy Tabernacle, the Ark, the Altar, and the Worſhip of your Forefathers, to join with the *Canaanites* in " the Worſhip of falſe Gods: Or, if unhappily you ſhould have been ſo miſled, do but repent, and diſclaim your " Error, and return to that Reverence, you owe to the Laws of God, and of your Country, and you ſhall be ſtill " receiv'd, &c." Jewiſh Antiquities, Lib. v. c. 1.

BIBLIOTECA NACIONAL
MADRID

A MAP OF CANAAN Divided among the Twelve Tribes.

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

PART of SHAM or SYRIA

Laodicea
Tripolis
Biblus
Sidon
Damascus
Sarepta
Tyre
Cana
Gebul
Tomb of Mennon
Mt. Hermon
Gefsur
L. Semechon
HALF TRIBE of MANASSAH
Gaulon
Hills of Bashan
TRIBE of ASHER
TRIBE of NAPHTALI
Argob
Capernaum
Mt. Sial
Zabulon
TRIBE of ZABULON
Mt. Carmel
Doro
Tiberias
Gadara
Mt. Gilead
TRIBE of ISSACHAR
Nazareth
Jabes R.
Hirpa
Gilgal
Cesarea
Socoth
HALF TRIBE of MANASSAH
TRIBE of GAD
Apollonia
Saron
Sarona
Schilo
Sophar
Dabir
Jaser
TRIBE of EPHRAIM
Joppa
Lydda
Archelais
Jordan
Dibon
Sea of Jaser
Mt. Phar
Gath
Gasphin
Gilgal
Cholon
River
Azotus
TRIBE of DAN
TRIBE of BENJAMIN
Modin
Jerusalem
Jericho
Beelmaus
Matthana
Ajalon
Nebel
Ascalon
Lachis
Bethhoron
Ophir
Almon
Macherus
Techoa
Arnon R.
TRIBE of SIMEON
Chebron
Engaddi
Sodome
Madian
Gaza
Ziglag
Lan
Jether
Anthedon
Berseheba
Aroer
Beer R.
Gomorra
Deblathaim
TRIBE of JUDAH
Jeuriel
Valley of Salt
Ziph
Holon
Engaddi Mt.
Maon
Dibongad
Gabsel
Desarts
Desart
IDUMEA
Geographical Miles
5 10 20 30 40
PART OF EDOM
DESART of SIN
AMALECHITES
EGYPT

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of them, the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and *Manaſſites* * proteſted their Innocence of any *idolatrous* Intention, and made a ſolemn Appeal to God, that ſo far were they from ſetting up any Altar, in Oppoſition to *his*, that the only Deſign of that Structure was, to perpetuate their Title to the Service of the Tabernacle, and to prevent their lateſt Poſterity from being excluded from it. Which when *Phineas* and the reſt of the Deputies heard, they expreſs'd no ſmall Satisfaction; and as they related the Account of the whole Matter upon their Return, the People were infinitely pleas'd with the Reſult of their Embaſſy, and chang'd their angry Thoughts of War into the tender Affections of brotherly Love and Peace: While the *Reubenites*, on the other Hand, to take away all farther Umbrage of Suſpicion, call'd the Altar by the Name of *Ed*, as being intended for a ſtanding *Witneſs* (for ſo the Word ſignifies) that, tho' they liv'd at a Diſtance from the reſt of their Brethren, yet had they both but one Origin, and one God, who was the common God and Father of all *Iſrael*.

THUS were the *Iſraelites*, on both Sides of the River *Jordan*, ſettled in a quiet Poſſeſſion of their Conqueſts; when *Joſhua*, being now grown old, and perceiving the Time of his Death approaching, call'd a general Aſſembly of the *Princes* and Magiſtrates, and as many of the common People, as could be got together upon this Occaſion, to *Shechem*; and having, in a very tender and affectionate Speech, enumerated the many Bleſſings, which God's Providence had beſtow'd upon them and their Anceſtors; how he had preſerv'd them in all their Dangers and Diſtreſſes, and reliev'd them in all their Wants; had made them victorious over all their Enemies, and, from a mean Beginning, rais'd them to the higheſt Degree of Reputation, and brought them into the quiet Poſſeſſion of a Land, that abounded with all Manner of Plenty; in Gratitude to ſo great a Protector and Benefactor, he exhorted them to a faithful Obſervance of his Laws, and invited them to a ſolemn Renewal of the *Covenant*, which their Forefathers had made with him. Which when they had done, he not only recorded the Covenant *in the Book of the Law*, but ſet up a great Stone likewiſe, under an Oak, near a Place of religious Worſhip, as a Teſtimony againſt them, in caſe they ſhould prevaricate from God's Service; and being now in the hundred and tenth Year of his Age, * not

From Joſh. i. to the End.

* If we can ſuppoſe any Truth in the *Samaritan* Tradition, *Nephiet*, who is ſaid to have been *Joſhua's Lieutenant* over the two Tribes and a Half, may very properly be thought the Perſon, who anſwer'd *Phineas* in the Words, which *Joſephus* thus puts in his Mouth: ——— "We are not conſcious of having ever departed from your Alliance, "neither are we, in any Sort, guilty of that Affectation of Novelty in erecting this *Altar*, which is now charg'd upon "us. We know but *one God*, and that God is the God of all the *Hebrews*; and but one *Altar*, which is the "Brazen Altar before the Tabernacle. As for this *Altar* here, which we are ſuſpected for, it was never intended "for any *religious* Uſe, but only for a *civil* Memorial to future Times of our Friendſhip and Alliance, and rather to "keep us ſteady in our antient Religion, than to be any ways introductive to the Violation of it. We can ſafely "appeal to God, that we had no ſuch Thought in ſetting up this *Altar*, as is imputed to us: And therefore, let us "intreat you to have a better Opinion of your Brethren for the future, than to think us guilty of ſo mortal an Apo-"ſtacy from the Rites and Cuſtoms of our Progenitors, a Sin not to be expiated, in any of the Sons of *Abraham*, "but with the Loſs of his Life." Jewiſh Antiquities, Lib. v. c. 1.

* *Jeſus* the Son of *Sirach* gives us a long Commendation of *Joſhua*, Ecclus. xlvi. 1, &c. but *Joſephus* is more conciſe in his Character, where he tells us, ——— "That he was a Man of political Prudence, and endued alſo with a "ſingular Felicity of popular Eloquence in expreſſing his Thoughts; brave, and indefatigable in War; and no leſs "juſt and dextrous in Peace; and, in ſhort, that he was a Perſon qualified for all great Purpoſes." He is generally reputed to be the Author of the Book that goes under his Name. In the 26th Verſe of the laſt Chapter, it is expreſsly ſaid, that *he wrote theſe Things*, Ecclus. xlvi. 1. The *Son* of *Sirach* has made him *Succeſſor* to *Moſes* in the prophetick Miniſtry. And both the Church and Synagogue have all along look'd upon the Book as *Canonical*. The Truth is, *Joſhua* was the only ſacred Penman, we know of, that the *Iſraelites* had in his Age. After he had finiſh'd the Diviſion of the Land, 'tis ſaid, chap. xxiii. 1. that he had many Years of great Leiſure, which he very probably employ'd in giving an Account of the Death and Burial of *Moſes* and *Eleazar*, and from thence continu'd a Narrative of what had been tranſacted under his own Adminiſtration, filling it up with a general Terrier of the Settlements of the Tribes, which was highly expedient for the *Iſraelites* to have recorded, in order to prevent Confuſion about their Inheritances in future Ages. Now if this Suppoſition be right, the Work of *Joſhua* muſt begin where that of *Moſes* ended,

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not long after this he died, and was bury'd at *Timnah-ſerah*, in Mount *Ephraim*, a Place which the *Iſraelites*, in Acknowledgment of his great Services, had given him.

IN a ſhort Time after, *Eleazar* the Son of *Aaron* the Prieſt, who liv'd near *Joſhua*, and died ſoon after him, was buried not far from him, in one of the Hills of *Ephraim*, † a Place which the *Iſraelites* had in like Manner preſented him with, and which afterwards deſcended to *Phineas*, his Son, and Succeſſor in the Prieſthood.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

And as the Funerals of theſe two great Men, ſo near the ſame Time and Place, call'd to Remembrance the Bones of *Joſeph*, which, at his Requeſt, * had been brought out of *Egypt*, but not yet interr'd; the two Tribes of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh* took this Opportunity to perform their Obſequies to the Remains of their great Progenitor, in a Parcel of Ground near *Shechem*, which *Jacob* having formerly bought, had *(f)* given to his Son *Joſeph*, and was now become the Inheritance of his Poſterity.

The OBJECTION.

"*JOSHUA*, no doubt, was a very "expert *General*, and the Succeſs of "his Arms againſt the *Canaanites* makes "no mean Figure in Hiſtory; but a "great deal of this may be reſolv'd into "the Treachery and Perfidiouſneſs, the "Folly and Infatuation of thoſe, that "pretend to oppoſe him. How deſpica- "ble an Inſtrument ſoever an *Harlot* may "be, yet certainly *Rahab* ſtood *Joſhua* "in no ſmall ſtead, when ſhe conceal'd "the Spies, and (as we may ſuppoſe) "help'd them to the beſt Intelligence "that ſhe could. In the New Teſtament "indeed, ſhe is rank'd among very good "Company, and her Character and Com- "mendation

ended, *viz.* at the xxxivth Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, and ended at the 27th Verſe of the xxivth Chapter of *Joſhua*. For as *Joſhua*, at the End of *Deuteronomy*, added an Account of *Moſes*'s Death; ſo what we find from the 28th Verſe of the xxivth Chapter of *Joſhua* to the End of that Book was unqueſtionably not written until *Joſhua* and all the Elders his Contemporaries were gone off the Stage, and was therefore added to end the Book of *Joſhua* by ſome ſacred Penman, (moſt probably by *Samuel)* who was afterwards employ'd to record the ſubſequent State of Affairs of *Iſrael*. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii. and *Patrick*'s Commentary, on Joſh. xxiv. 33. But there is not the like Certainty of another Book of *Joſhua*'s, which the *Samaritans* preſerve with much Reſpect, and make great Uſe of, in the Support of their Pretenſions againſt the *Jews*; neither can we tell, whether *Joſhua* was the Author of that *Prayer*, which the *Jews* repeat as oft as they go into the Synagogues, and begins thus, ——— *It is our Duty to praiſe the Lord of the Univerſe, and to celebrate the Creation of the World; for he hath not made us like unto the Nations of the Earth, but hath prepared for us an Inheritance infinitely richer and greater*, &c. *Wagenſeil*'s Tela Ignea Satanæ, Page 223, and *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word.

† This Place is, in the *Hebrew*, call'd the *Hill of Phineas*, it being cuſtomary in thoſe Days for Men to call Places by the Names of their *eldeſt* Son. But then the Queſtion is, To whom did the *Iſraelites* give this Hill? The moſt probable Anſwer is, That they gave it to *Eleazar*, for, he being the High-Prieſt, at the Time of the Diviſion of the Land, they thought proper to give him a peculiar Portion, diſtinct from other Cities of the Prieſts, which were all in the Tribes of *Judah*, *Benjamin*, and *Simeon*, and none in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, Joſh. xxi. 9, 17, 19. And they made Choice of this Country the rather, that he might be near the Tabernacle, which was at *Shiloh*, and near to *Joſhua*, who liv'd at *Shechem*, to be ready, on all Occaſions, to adviſe him, and conſult the Oracle for him. But then againſt this there lies an Objection, *viz.* that no *Levite* or *Prieſt* was to have any Portion in the Diviſion of the Land; and therefore it is a receiv'd Opinion among the *Jews*, that either *Eleazar*, or *Phineas*, had this Inheritance in Right of his Wife: Tho' we cannot ſee, why the High-Prieſt eſpecially, who was certainly the *ſecond* Perſon in the Government, might not have a Manſion-Houſe, and ſome Domains allotted him, for the greater State and Dignity of his Living, without any great Infringement upon the general Laws. *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Joſh.* xxiv. 33.

* It may reaſonably be thought, that the Bodies of the reſt of the Sons of *Jacob*, from whom the twelve Tribes deſcended, were brought into *Canaan*, to be there interr'd, as *Joſephus* relates from ancient Tradition, *Antiquities*, Lib. ii. c. 4. and as St *Stephen* confirms it, Acts vii. 16. For tho' *Joſeph* excell'd them all in Dignity, and gave this ſpecial Charge about his Body, yet every Tribe, no doubt, had as great a Regard for their Progenitor, and would be inclin'd to do the ſame for their Fathers, that *Joſeph*'s Deſcendants did for him: But whether they bury'd them in the Sepulchre of *Machpelah*, or in ſome eminent Place in their own Tribe, as *Joſeph* was, there is no one, that gives us any Account. *Patrick*'s Commentary, on *Joſh.* xxiv. 32.

(f) Gen. xlviii. 22.

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" mendation *(g)* is twice commemorated, " but for what Reaſon we cannot tell, " unleſs it be *(h)* for lying to the Govern- " ment, and betraying her Country into " the Hands of its moſt cruel Enemies; " which is ſurely an Example, that de- " ſerves our Deteſtation rather than " Praiſe.

" THE *Iſraelites* were commanded by " God (whoſe Injunctions we are not to " diſpute) *(i) to have no Mercy upon the* " Inhabitants of *Canaan, but to ſmite and* " *utterly deſtroy them*; and therefore it " looks like mere Madneſs and Infatua- " tion, that a People, who knew them- " ſelves devoted to Deſtruction, (inſtead " of going over to the Enemy, or oppo- " ſing them by *Piece-meals)* did not con- " federate all together, either to expel " thoſe Invaders from their Countries, or " to ſell their Lives and Liberties at as " dear a Price as poſſible.

" SOME of theſe Nations were account- " ed a bold and warlike People; but cer- " tainly the Inhabitants of *Jericho* acted " like mere *Poltrons*, when they coop'd " themſelves up within the Walls of the " City, and never once thought of diſ- " puting the Paſs over the River *Jordan*. " For, whatever we may talk of that " wonderful Paſſage, 'tis evident *(k)* from " the Teſtimony of Travellers, that the " River was no more than a Brook in " Compariſon, and fordable in ſeveral " Places, as *(l)* the Scripture itſelf allows. " But even ſuppoſe it was not, 'tis no " uncommon Thing, *(m)* in Hiſtory to " read of Rivers, larger than this, by the " Force of ſome contrary Wind, driven " back, and their Channels lay dry.

" FOR a People obſervant of his Laws, " God no doubt will, and often does, " work Wonders, in order to give them " an Advantage over their Enemies; but " it is hard to conceive, what Reaſon " there ſhould be for exerting any mira- " culous Power in Behalf of thoſe, who, " as if aſham'd of the Covenant made " with their Forefather *Abraham*, had " now omitted the Sacrament of *Circum-* " *ciſion* ſo long; and, in a ſhort Time " after, had no manner of Regard to God's " *Sabbath*, when they went ſounding their " Horns about *Jericho*, or rather (as ſome " think) aſſaulted the Town, and imbru'd " their Hands in the Blood of ſo many " *Innocents*, on that ſacred Day.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

" INSTEAD of *Rams-Horns*, which " are a little improper, one would think, " to make *muſical* Inſtruments of, a Sol- " dier would be tempted to ſay, that the " *Iſraelites* made uſe of *Battering-Rams* " upon this Occaſion: But thoſe, who " have ſtudy'd the Philoſophy of Sounds, " will tell us, that they have a certain " natural Fitneſs to break and demoliſh " ſolid Bodies; or, if this was not the " Caſe, from the violent Effects of ſub- " terraneous Eruptions, or the blowing up " ſome Magazines of Powder, one would " really imagine, that the Fall of the Walls " of *Jericho* was occaſion'd by ſome natu- " ral Cauſe.

" *JOSHUA*, as an old experienc'd " *General*, was doubtleſs Maſter of many " Stratagems, which the ignorant Herd " knew nothing of; and therefore he " might give the Word of Command for " them to *ſhout aloud*, when, at the ſame " Time, he order'd the Match to be laid " to the *Train*, that led to the *Mine* under " the Walls, and ſo they, poor Creatures, " might imagine, that it was either their " Noiſe, or ſome miraculous Stroke, that " made them fall; when, in *reality*, the " whole was effected by nothing elſe, but " ſome new Device in War. But by " what Means ſoever he vanquiſh'd the " City, it ſeems a little extravagant, if not " brutal in him, after he had laid it in " Aſhes, to load it with ſuch heavy Im- " precations, when he had loſt no Men, " and met with ſo little Moleſtation in " taking it.

" WHAT

(g) Heb. xi. 31. and Jam. ii. 25. *(h)* Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, p. 263. *(i)* Deut. vii. 2. *(k)* *Sandys*'s Travels, Lib. iii. p. 141. *(l)* Joſh. ii. 7. *(m)* Vid. *Pliny*'s Hiſt. Lib. ii. Cap. 102. *Dionyſ. Halicarn.* Antiq. Roman. Lib. vi. p. 351. and Lib. vii. p. 409.

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" What the myſterious Oracle of " *Urim* and *Thummim* may be, 'tis paſt " the Skill of Man perhaps to know; but, " be it what it will, it ſeems to have done " the *Iſraelites* no great Service, when it " could not hinder *Joſhua* and the other " Princes, no not even *Eleazar* himſelf, " who wore it, from being impos'd on by " the *Gibeonites*. The *Gibeonites* indeed " acted the crafty Part, and, ſince it was " to ſave themſelves, were not much to be " diſcommended; but certainly the *Iſra-* " *elites* might have known better, than to " think themſelves bound by an Oath, " that was not only drawn from them by " *Wile* and Artifice, but was repugnant " likewiſe to that divine Injunction, which " *previouſly* oblig'd them to extirpate all " the *Canaanites*, even tho' they ſu'd for " Peace never ſo earneſtly, and *(m) to* " *make no Covenant* with them, even tho' " they offer'd to become *Proſelytes* never " ſo ſincerely.

" The *Iſraelites* indeed, according to " the Repreſentation which *Joſhua* gives " us of them, were at the beſt but a giddy, " thoughtleſs Kind of People, elated with " Succeſſes, dejected with any Misfortunes, " and wild and boiſterous in the Proſecu- " tion of their Paſſions; for, to inſult over " *one* poor City with Imprecations and " Curſes, when it already lay in Aſhes, " (as was the Caſe at *Jericho)* to droop in " their Courage, and utterly deſpond, " upon a ſmall Defeat given them at *ano-* " *ther*, (as was the Caſe of *Ai)* and to fly " into a Flame, take up Arms, and vow " Revenge, tho' they knew not well for " what, (as was the Caſe between them " and their Brethren beyond *Jordan)* " argues ſuch a Baſeneſs of Mind, and " Barbarity of Temper, and Rudeneſs of " Manners, as but badly become the elect " People of God.

" But well may the Author of this " Book make thus free with his People, " when he is not afraid to record ſuch " Things, as cannot but reflect Diſhonour " upon the ſacred Attributes of God him- " ſelf. *Achan* indeed was a wicked Man " in purloining ſome Part of the Plunder " to himſelf; but what had his poor " Children done, that they muſt be com- " mitted to the ſame Flames? The City " of *Ai* had given the *Iſraelites* ſome " Moleſtation, and was to be ſubdu'd at " all Adventures; but what Neceſſity was " there for God to make uſe of Stratagem " and Artifice (Means, which ſeem below " the Greatneſs of the Almighty, and * " which ſome Nations and Generals have " rejected, as unworthy brave Men) to " give the Victory to his own Creatures. From Joſh. i. to the End.

" To theſe People of his indeed he " had been very kind, in giving them " what he did of the Land of *Canaan*; " but ſince his Promiſe extended to the " *whole*, ſince *(n) from the Wilderneſs*, " *and this* Lebanon, *unto the great River* " Euphrates, *all the Land of the* Hittites, " *and unto the great Sea, towards the going* " *down of the Sun* (as he aſſur'd *Joſhua)* " *was to be their Coaſt*, it looks a little " ſtrange, that God ſhould falſify his " Promiſe, (for all theſe Territories they " never poſſeſs'd) and thus cut them " ſhort.

" Other Slips in our Author may be " excuſable; his talking of the *(o) Sanc-* " *tuary*'s being at *Shechem*, when indiſ- " putably it was at *Shiloh*, may charitably " be imputed to ſome ſmall Defect of " Memory; but it really ſhocks one, and " is enough to impeach the Authority of " the Book itſelf, to find recorded in it " ſuch Paſſages, as ſeem to leave an Impu- " tation of Cruelty, Craft, and Breach of " Promiſe

(m) Deut. vii. 2, &c.

* It was the Expreſſion of *Alexander the Great*, that he would not *ſteal a Victory*. The ancient *Greeks* gave Notice to their Enemies, when, and where they ſhould engage them. The old *Romans* knew not what Cunning and ſubtle Wiles in carrying on War meant: *Non Fraude, neque occultè, ſed palàm, & Armatum Populum Romanum Hoſtes ſuos ulciſci.* They ſought Victory only by Force and honeſt Fighting, deſiring that their Enemies might be convinc'd of their Valour, and ſubmit to them without Regret, becauſe they were the ſtronger. *Calmet*'s Commentary, on *Joſh.* viii.

(n) Joſh. i. 4. *(o)* Ibid. xxiv. 25, 26.

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" Promiſe upon God, whom all Mankind muſt allow to be the Fountain and " Foundation of all Honour, Truth, and " Goodneſs."

Anſwer'd by ſhewing the Reaſon why the Canaanites *made no better* Defence.

(p) WHO is like unto thee, O Lord, among the Gods? Who is like unto thee, glorious in Holineſs, fearful in Praiſes, doing Wonders? Thou, in thy Mercy, haſt led forth the People, whom thou haſt redeemed; thou haſt guided them, in thy Strength, unto thy Holy Habitation. The People ſhall hear, and ſhall be afraid; Sorrow ſhall take hold on the Inhabitants of Paleſtina. *The Elders of* Edom *ſhall be amaz'd; the mighty Men of* Moab *ſhall tremble, and all the Inhabitants of* Canaan *ſhall melt away. Fear and Dread ſhall fall upon them. By the Greatneſs of thy Arm they ſhall be as ſtill as a Stone, till thy People paſs over, O Lord, till thy People paſs over, whom thou haſt purchaſed. Thou ſhalt bring them in, and plant them in the Mountain of thine Inheritance, in the Place, O Lord, which thou haſt made for them to dwell in; in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy Hand hath eſtabliſhed.*

THESE Words are Part of that triumphant Song, which *Moſes* made, upon the Deſtruction of the *Egyptians* in the *Red-Sea*. They are plain Predictions of what befel the *Iſraelites* forty Years after, and a Declaration they are, that the Conqueſt of their Country was, not only by the Order and Appointment, but by the immediate Help and Aſſiſtance of God; *(q) for* (as the Pſalmiſt expreſſes it) *they got not the Land in Poſſeſſion thro' their own Sword, neither was it their own Arm that helped them; but thy right Hand, and thine Arm, and the Light of thy Countenance, becauſe thou haſt a Favour unto them.* And, if God ſo immediately concern'd himſelf in the Conqueſt of the Country, we need not wonder, that we hear of the People, who were to defend it, being *amaz'd* and *trembling*, and *melting away with Fear*. The *Jewiſh* Doctors have a Tradition, that the vaſt Heaps of Waters, pil'd upon one another, while the *Iſraelites* paſs'd over the River *Jordan*, being ſeen by the People of *Jericho*, and other adjacent Places, occaſion'd ſo general a Conſternation, that they never once thought of maintaining the Paſs. And indeed their Conſternation muſt have been very great, when we find them encloſing themſelves within their Walls, and ſuffering the *Iſraelites* to ſurround them ſeven Days ſucceſſively, without even once attempting to make a *Sally*. They ſaw, in ſhort, that a Power, ſuperior to all human Oppoſition, was engag'd againſt them; and therefore whatever *prior Meaſures* they had taken for their mutual Defence, upon the Approach of an Army, commanded by one, who, when he pleaſes, *(r) maketh the Devices of the People ineffectual, and caſteth out the Counſels of Princes*, they were all broken and diſconcerted.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

IT cannot be deny'd indeed, but that, in antient Times, there was a great Affinity between the Buſineſs of an *Hoſteſs* and an *Harlot*. Thoſe, who kept *Inns*, or publick Houſes for the Entertainment of Strangers, made no Scruple of proſtituting their Bodies: and for this Reaſon perhaps it is, that, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, there is but one Word, *viz. Zonah*, to denote Perſons of both Profeſſions. For this Reaſon very likely it was, that the *Septuagint*, ſpeaking of *Rahab*, give her the Appellation of an *Harlot*, and as (the *Septuagint* was, at this Time, the common Tranſlation of the *Jews*) for this very Reaſon, the two Apoſtles, *(s)* St *Paul* and *(t)* St *James*, as they found it in the Tranſlation, might make uſe of the ſame Expreſſion. It is to be obſerv'd however, that, as the Expreſſion is capable of another Senſe, the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt calls her by a Word, which comes from the *Greek* Πανδοχευτρία or *a Woman that kept a publick Houſe*, without any Work of Infamy; and therefore Charity ſhould incline us to think the beſt of a Perſon, whom both theſe Apoſtles have rank'd with *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, and propounded as an Example

Rahab *not an Harlot.*

(t) Exod. xv. 11, &c. (q) Pſal. xliv. 3, 4. (r) Ibid. xxxiii. 10. (s) Heb. xi. 31. (t) Jam. ii. 25.

A. M. 2553. &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1451. &c.

Example of Faith and good Works; who was admitted into the Society of God's People; marry'd into a † noble Family of the Tribe of *Judah*; and of whoſe Poſterity *Chriſt*, the Saviour of the World, was born.

Nor blameable for impoſing on the King's Officers.

To ſave the Lives of the Innocent is certainly a very commendable Thing; but whether it may be done by the Help of Diſſimulation and Falſhood, or whether *Rahab*, in concealing the Spies, and pretending to the King's Meſſengers, that they were juſt gone, did not incur the Sin of wilful Lying, is a Queſtion not ſo very eaſy to be reſolv'd. Men, as they are Members of a *Civil* Society, have certainly a *Right* to Truth, and the very Deſign of *Speech* is to be the Conveyance of our real Sentiments to one another; but ſome *Caſuiſts* are of Opinion, that Circumſtances may ſo happen, as to make it both lawful and neceſſary, not only to diſguiſe the Truth, but to impoſe upon others by a falſe Information. Suppoſe a *Madman*, for Inſtance, with a drawn Sword in his Hand, ſhould purſue a Friend of mine, with a full Intent to kill him; and my Friend, by the Benefit of ſome ſhort Turning, gives him the *Drop*, ſo that, having loſt Sight of him, he comes and demands of me, which Way he took; but I, inſtead of ſetting him right, point the Aſſaſſin another Way: In this Caſe, I preſume, I commit no Crime, becauſe the Man, in theſe Circumſtances, has forfeited all Right to Truth, nor could I indeed impart it to him, without making myſelf inſtrumental to my Friend's Murther. This, in a great Meaſure, was *Rahab*'s Caſe. Her Deſign was, to ſave the Spies from the Hands of thoſe, that were ſent to apprehend them, but in vain had ſhe form'd ſuch a Deſign, unleſs ſhe was reſolv'd to put it in Execution; and yet, what other Way had ſhe of executing it, but by telling a Lye? It had been to no Purpoſe for her to have hid them on the Roof of her Houſe, if, for the Sake of Truth, ſhe had thought herſelf oblig'd to diſcover the Place of their Concealment; if her Silence had given any Umbrage of Suſpicion to their Purſuers; if ſhe had not, in ſhort, by a bold Aſſertion, diverted their Enquiry ſome other Way. In this Caſe the Deſign and the Means of executing it were inſeparable. And yet, ſince a Deſign, which could no Ways be executed without the Help of a Lye, is both prais'd and propos'd in Scripture, as a Pattern for the Church to imitate, what Right have we to condemn it? Or, upon what Preſumption can we imagine, that *Rahab* would have acted more agreeably to the Mind of God, in diſcovering the Spies out of Reſpect to Truth, than ſhe did, in preſerving them by Virtue of a feign'd Story? But there is another Way of accounting for *Rahab*'s Conduct, and that is this —— *(u)* The Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* informs us, that *(x) by Faith ſhe periſh'd not with them that believ'd not, when ſhe had receiv'd the Spies with Peace*; where the *Greek* Words are not Τοῖς ἀπίστοις, *with the Unbelievers*, but τοῖς ἀπειθήσασι, *with the diſobedient*, or thoſe that were not perſuaded of the Truth of what was told them. But how the Inhabitants of *Jericho* can be ſaid to be unconvinc'd or diſobedient, if God had reveal'd nothing to them, or requir'd nothing of them, we cannot conceive. Some Information muſt have been given both to them and *Rahab*, otherwiſe they could not be condemn'd for Diſobedience, nor ſhe commended for her *Faith*, i. e. for believing and acting, according to the Will of God, made known unto her. Upon the Suppoſition then, that the Deſign of God towards the Inhabitants of *Canaan* was ſome Way or other reveal'd to the King, and People of *Jericho*, and both he and they had been ſufficiently warn'd to ſave themſelves from the Deſtruction that was coming upon them, if they would not obey, but if

From Joſh. i. to the End.

Rahab

† *Rahab* marry'd *Salmon*, a Prince of *Judah*, by whom ſhe had *Boaz*. *Boaz* was Father of *Obed*, *Obed* of *Jeſſe*, and *Jeſſe* of King *David*: So that *Jeſus Chriſt* did not diſdain to reckon this *Canaanitiſh* Woman among his Anceſtors. *Calmet*'s Dictionary.

(u) Shuckford's Connection, Vol. III. Lib xii. *(x)* Heb. xi. 31.

A. M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1451, &c.

Rahab did, and acted conformably to the Information that was given her, her whole Behaviour will not only ſtand clear of every criminal Imputation, but be highly commendable, and juſtly deſerve a Rank among thoſe illuſtrious Patterns, which the *Apoſtle* propoſes to our Imitation, as being a Perſon juſtify'd not only by her *Faith*, (y) but her *Works* likewiſe, *when ſhe receiv'd the Meſſengers, and ſent them out another way.*

And taking Part againſt her own Country.

THE Declaration, which their kind Protectreſs makes to them, (z) *I know that the Lord hath given you the Land, and that your Terror is fallen upon us, and that all the Inhabitants of the Land faint becauſe of you, for the Lord your God he is, God in Heaven above, and in Earth beneath,* beſpeaks the full Perſuaſion of her Mind; and therefore, not doubting, but that the Ruler of the Univerſe had an uncontroulable Right to diſpoſe of all Kingdoms and Countries according to his good Pleaſure, ſhe judg'd it reaſonable *to obey God rather than Man*, and thereupon endeavour'd, as much as in her lay, to deliver up the Land to the *true Owners*, to thoſe, whom God, by his Donation, had made its rightful Proprietors.

AN Order from Heaven moſt certainly releaſes the *Subject* from his Allegiance to his *Prince*, and the *Citizen* from the Engagement, he lies under to thoſe, that are of the ſame Society: And therefore *Rahab*, having ſuch an Order, (or, at leaſt what was equivalent to it) was at full Liberty to eſpouſe what Party ſhe pleas'd, and muſt have been perfidious to God, and forgetful of her own Preſervation, if ſhe had acted otherwiſe than ſhe did. For (a) even ſetting aſide her *Faith*, (for which ſhe is ſo juſtly commended in the Goſpel) if ſhe had heard of the Deſtruction of *Pharaoh* in *Egypt*, and of the other two Kings on the *Eaſt* Side of *Jordan*, the King of *Jericho* can hardly be ſuppos'd to be ignorant of their Fate: And therefore it was as natural for her to be terrify'd at it, and to provide for her Safety, as it was for him to make a brave Reſiſtance, or periſh in the Attempt. If therefore what the Scripture ſeems to intimate be true, *viz.* that *Joſhua* was oblig'd to offer Peace, before he made uſe of the Sword againſt any of the *Canaanitiſh* Nations; it was as lawful for her, or any other Subject, to accept this Peace, as it was glorious perhaps for a Monarch to refuſe it. At leaſt we cannot but think, that the Refuſal of ſuch advantageous Terms from an irreſiſtible *Conqueror*, at the Riſque of being all infallibly *maſſacred* by him, for the ſake of a King, who (for ought that appears to the contrary) might be a *petty Tyrant*, or for the Sake of a People, whom Fear had render'd incapable of making any tolerable Reſiſtance; when perhaps the Difference of being under the *natural Monarch*, (if he was really ſuch) or the *Conqueror*, was inconſiderable, or (it may be) on the Side of the *latter*: We cannot but think, I ſay, that ſuch a Refuſal would have been an Inſtance of *Patriotiſm*, not to be expected from a *Canaanite*, and, much leſs, from ſuch a young *Hoſteſs*, as *Rahab* muſt have been, ſince we read of her being the Mother of *Boaz*, above thirty Years after this. So that, upon the whole, ſhe acted a Part, that might naturally be expected from her, no ways inglorious in itſelf, and highly agreeable to the Will of God, when ſhe adjoin'd herſelf to thoſe, who, by his Almighty Arm, were ſo viſibly ſupported; and abandon'd the Intereſt of thoſe, who, upon ſo many Accounts, were very juſtly devoted to Deſtruction.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

Reaſons for God's treating the Canaanites *ſo ſeverely.*

WHAT the Spirit ſays unto the Church at *Thyatira*, (b) *I gave her Space to repent of her Fornication, but ſhe repented not; Behold, I will caſt her into a Bed, and them that commit Adultery with her into great Tribulation, and I will kill her Children with Death, and give unto every one according to his Works*, is very applicable to the ſeveral Nations in the Land of *Canaan*. Four hundred Years were to intervene

(y) Jam. ii. 25. (z) Joſh. ii. 9, 11. (a) Univerſ. Hiſt. lib. i. c. 7. (b) Revel. ii. 21, &c.

A. M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1451, &c.

intervene between the Commencement of the Promiſe to *Abraham*, and this Completion of it; and the Reaſon, which God gives for this long Delay, is, that *(c) the Iniquity of the* Amorites (and by the *Amorites*, he means all the other Nations of *Canaan) was not yet full: And (d) even tho'* (as the Author of the Book of Wiſdom argues) *he could have deſtroyed them all with one rough Word, yet, executing his Judgments by little and little, he gave them Place of Repentance, not being ignorant that they were an haughty Generation, and that their Malice was bred in them, and their Cogitation would never be changed.* For inſtead of reforming, the only Effect, which this Delay had, was, to make them more confirm'd in Wickedneſs, and becauſe *(e) this Sentence againſt their evil Works was not ſpeedily executed*, therefore were *their Hearts the fuller ſet in them to do Evil.*

What the Nature and Heinouſneſs of their Iniquities were, we may beſt learn (from *(f)* the many Precautions, which God gives his People againſt them; *for he hated them* (as the *(g)* ſame Author has drawn up the Articles of Accuſation againſt them) *for doing moſt odious Works of Witchcraft, and wicked Sacrifices, for their mercileſs murthering of Children, devouring of Man's Fleſh, and feaſting upon Blood*; and if we may ſuppoſe, that God, ſome way or other, had given theſe Nations ſufficient Notice of his intended Severity againſt them if they did not repent; had abundant Reaſon to preſerve his own People from the Infection of the *Abominations*; and, before their Extirpation was executed, did, *(h)* by his Servant *Joſhua*, offer them Conditions of Peace: Tho' the divine Counſels are a Secret to us, yet, (even upon this Face of Things) we cannot find any Fault with his Treatment of them, ſince, when he had given them *Space to repent, and they repented not*, his Juſtice was certainly then at Liberty to take what Vengeance his divine Wiſdom ſhould think fit. From Joſh. i. to the End.

And indeed this ſeems to be one of the Reaſons, why God divided the River for the *Iſraelites*, who were to be the Inſtruments of this his Vengeance to paſs over, *viz.* That thereby he might inject a Terror into the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, and ſo facilitate the Conqueſt of their Country. On the Side of *Jordan*, the Kings of the Neighbourhood fear'd no Invaſion. The Depth of the River (eſpecially at the Time of its Overflowing, which was in the *Harveſt* when the *Iſraelites (i)* paſs'd it) was Barrier ſufficient, they thought, againſt all that the *Iſraelites* could do. For, in thoſe Days, *Pontoons* were Things never heard of in military Expeditions; and the * Stream is (even at this Day) allow'd to be too fierce and rapid for any one to ſwim over: And therefore, as they expected no Danger from that Quarter, and might for that Reaſon draw out no Forces to defend that Side of their Frontier; ſo the ſacred Hiſtorian has taken Care to inform us, that *(k) when all the Kings of the* Amorites, *which were on the Side of* Jordan *weſtward, and* *Reaſons for the* Iſraelites *Paſſage of* Jordan.

(c) Gen. xv. 16. (d) Wiſd. xii. 9, 10. (e) Eccleſ. viii. 11. (f) Vide Lev. xviii. 4. Deut. ix. 4, &c. (g) Wiſd. xii. 4, 5. (h) Deut. xx. 10, 11. Joſh. xi. 19. (i) Joſh. iii. 15. 1 Chron. xii. 15. and Eccluſ. xxiv. 26.

* That the ſacred Writings do conſtantly repreſent this River as not fordable, except at ſome particular Places, very probably made by Art, that the Countries on each Side may have a freer Communication, is plain from the Paſſages, to which theſe ſeveral Citations *Joſh.* ii. 2. *Judg.* iii. 28. and xii. 5. 2 *Kings* ii. 14. do refer. That it was not a poor and inconſiderable Stream, ſuch as ſome have repreſented it, is evident from the Account of *Thevenot* (in his *Travels*, page 193.) who himſelf went near the Place, where the *Iſraelites* paſs'd over, and deſcribes it to be "half as broad as the *Seine* at *Paris*, very deep, and very rapid:" which agrees very well with what *Maundrell* (in his *Journey from* Alleppo, p. 83.) ſays of it, *viz.* "That its Channel is twenty Yards over, deeper than a Man's "Height, and runs with ſuch a Current, that there is no ſwimming againſt it:" And that (whatever the preſent Condition of *Jordan* may be) 'tis certain, when the *Iſraelites* came into *Canaan*, it was a much larger River than now it is, for even in *Pliny*'s Time, (Nat. Hiſt. Lib. v.) its Channel was much larger than what it now runs in, having then the Title of *Amnis Ambitioſus*; and, in the Days, when *Strabo* wrote (according to his Geog. Lib. xvi.) even Veſſels of Burthen might navigate in it. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii.

(k) Joſh. v. 1.

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and all the Kings of the Canaanites, *which were by the* Sea, *heard that the Lord had dried up the Waters of* Jordan *from before the Children of* Iſrael, *until they were paſſed over, their Hearts melted, neither was there Spirit in them any more.*

AND as this miraculous Paſſage could not but fill their Enemies with Confuſion, ſo it added, no doubt, freſh Courage to the *Iſraelites*, when they came to conſider, that the ſame God, about forty Years before, had wrought the like Miracle, for them in their Paſſage of the *Red-Sea*; that *then* he divided the *Waves*, *(l)* to confirm the Commiſſion, which he had given *Moſes*, and *now* had parted the *Stream*, to ſtrengthen the Authority of his Succeſſor, *Joſhua*, and to give them Aſſurance, that *(m) he would be with the one, as he had been with the other*, and impower the *latter* to make good their Poſſeſſion *of the Land of Promiſe*, even as he had enabled the *former* to accompliſh their Deliverance *out of the Land of Bondage*.

And that it was really miraculous.

IN all Rivers whatever, there, queſtionleſs, are ſome ſhallower Places than ordinary, or ſome Paſſages, either by Boats or Bridges, that may be called *Fords*; but that the *Jordan*, at this Time, was either ſo vaſtly overflown, as to render theſe *Fords* impaſſable, or that the *Iſraelites* croſs'd it at Places, which the Enemy never thought of, and where none of theſe *Paſſes* were to be found, is pretty evident from the *Canaanites* making no Preparation to defend their Coaſts on the *River-ſide*, and from the great Conſternation, we find them in, when once they underſtood that the *Jewiſh* Army had got over. For (whatever Opinion we, at this Diſtance of Time, may have of the Matter) they juſtly inferr'd, that the Suſpenſion of a River's Courſe could be effected no other Way, than by a divine Power, either *immediately* acting itſelf, or by the *Inſtrumentality* of its Angels. And though there poſſibly may be ſome Inſtances in Hiſtory, wherein, by the Violence of adverſe Winds, the Courſe of Rivers has either been retarded, or * driven back; yet, as we read of no ſuch Wind concern'd in this Event, the Prediction of *Joſhua*, and the Promiſes of God concerning this Miracle, the Time in which he choſe to work it, and the Analogy it bears with what before was wrought at the *Red-Sea*; theſe, and ſeveral other Circumſtances, make this Tranſaction beyond *Compare*, and rank it, not only among thoſe Prodigies, which very rarely come to paſs, but among thoſe ſtupendous Works, which (contrary to the Laws of Nature) the great Author and Ruler of the *Univerſe*, for the Preſervation of his People, and the Manifeſtation of his own Glory, is ſometimes obſerv'd to do.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

Why Circumciſion might be omitted.

(n) He, that is born in thy Houſe, or he that is bought with thy Money, muſt needs be circumciſed, and my Covenant ſhall be in your Fleſh for an everlaſting Covenant; and the uncircumciſed Man-child, whoſe Fleſh of his Foreſkin is not circumciſed, that Soul ſhall be cut off from his People; he hath broken my Covenant. Theſe are the Words of the Precept, and they ſeem to be ſo very urgent and expreſs, that one would really think the Ordinance was intended, not only for a Diſtinction between *Jew* and *Gentile*, but for an Inſtitution likewiſe, to take away the Guilt of *Original* Sin. And yet, even upon this Suppoſition, *(o)* the People's frequent Moving from Place to Place, the Uncertainty of their Decampments, and the Inconvenience of their Travelling, which would make it dangerous for Children to be circumcis'd before a March, might be ſome

(l) *Saurin*'s Diſſertation ſur le Paſſage du *Jourdain*. *(m)* Joſh. i. 17.

* Something of this Nature ſeems to have happen'd in *Auguſtus*'s Time, according to that known Paſſage in *Horace*:

Vidimus Flavum *Tiberim*, retortis
Littore Etruſco violentèr Undis,
Ire dejectum Monumentum Regis,
Templaque *Veſtæ*. Lib. i. ODE. II.

(n) Gen. xvii. 13, 14. *(o)* *Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur la Priſe de *Jericho*.

A. M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1451, &c.

ſome Apology for their omitting the Obſervation of this Rite, even though they had no divine Diſpenſation for it.

(p) It is one of the general Rules among the *Jews*, that *no Precept*, (always meaning no *ceremonial* Precept, for ſome Precepts there are, that were to be obſerv'd, even at the Expence of their Lives) *whoſe Obſervation occaſions Death, is to be attended to*, becauſe the Scriptures ſay, that *he who obſerveth theſe Laws, ſhall live*, not die, *by them*. But how frivolous ſoever this Reaſon may be, 'tis certain, that, in Caſe they apprehended any Danger from the Operation, they carry'd this Diſpenſation ſo far, as to exempt the next Child from having this Ordinance paſs upon him, if ſo be that his Brother before him died of the Wound which he receiv'd in Circumciſion. And for a farther Excuſe, they add, that, during their Sojourning in the Wilderneſs, for one Crime or other, their Forefathers were generally under the divine Diſpleaſure, in which Condition it would have been a Prophanation of the *Sacrament* to have adminiſter'd it.

But then, if the other Notion of this Ordinance be admitted, *viz.* that it was no more than a *Note* of Diſtinction between the *Iſraelites* and other Nations, as the *Iſraelites* were now alone in the Wilderneſs, there was no Danger of their mixing with others, and conſequently leſs Reaſon for their Obſervation of this *diſtinguiſhing* Rite, until they ſhould enter upon the Poſſeſſion of a Country, where every Kind of Idolatry ſurrounded them on all Hands.

Thus, whether we look upon the Rite of *Circumciſion*, as a Sacrament of *Initiation* into the *Jewiſh* Church, or a Character of Diſtinction only between them and other People, the *Iſraelites* might, without the Imputation of much Guilt, omit the outward Obſervance of it, if ſo be that they did but attend to what was the true Intent and Meaning of it, *viz.* *(q) the circumciſing the Foreſkin of their Hearts*; *(r) for he is not a* Jew, (as St *Paul* excellently argues) *who is one outwardly, neither is that Circumciſion, which is outward in the Fleſh*; *but he is a* Jew, *who is one inwardly, and Circumciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whoſe Praiſe is not of Men, but of God.* From Joſh. i. to the End.

In like Manner, the Obſervation of the *Sabbath-Day* was a Precept of ſevere Injunction; but, whether the Deſtruction of *Jericho* happen'd on that Day, or any other of the Week, (as the *Iſraelites* were order'd to compaſs the City for ſeven Days *ſucceſſively*) 'tis certain, that one of theſe Days muſt neceſſarily have been the Sabbath; and yet we muſt not ſuppoſe that they committed any great Offence in what they did, becauſe the ſame Authority, which made the Law for the Obſervation of it, gave now a full Licence for the Prophanation of it. The Perſon who met *Joſhua*, and preſcrib'd the Form of the Siege of *Jericho*, by his Aſſumption of divine Honours and Appellations, was doubtleſs the ſame, who deliver'd the Law from Mount *Sinai*: And therefore we need not queſtion, but that *now* he acted in as full Power, in ſuſpending, (ſince his Orders could not be executed without ſuch Suſpenſion) as he *then* did in enjoining the Obſervation of the *Sabbath*; and 'tis in Alluſion (as ſome imagine) to this very Paſſage, that our bleſſed Saviour pronounc'd that Maxim in the Goſpel, *(s) the Sabbath was made for Man, and not Man for the Sabbath.* *And the* Sabbath *not obſerv'd.*

However this be, 'tis certain, that, before our Saviour's Days, the *Jews* carry'd the Obſervation of the Sabbath to a great Degree of Rigour. In the Time of the *Maccabees*, they would not ſo much as defend themſelves againſt the Aſſault of their Enemies on that Day, *(t)* but yielded their Throats to be cut, rather than ſtir an Hand in their own Vindication: Whereas this Example of their Forefathers *inveſting*, if not *ſacking Jericho* on the Sabbath-day, might have taught them, one would

(p) Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in 1 Cor. vii. 19. *(q)* Deut. x. 16. *(r)* Rom. ii. 28, 29. *(s)* Mark ii. 27.
(t) Prideaux's Connection, Part II. Vol. IV.

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would think, that, in Caſes of this Nature, is was allowable, not only to defend themſelves, but to prevent their Enemies annoying them, nay, even to fall upon, and deſtroy them, whenever a favourable Opportunity preſented itſelf on that Day.

Why Rams-Horns were made uſe of at the Taking of Jericho.

IN the Conqueſt of *Jericho* however, ſome have imagined, that *Rams-horns* were not proper *Materials*, whereof to make Trumpets; that they are not ſo eaſily *perforated*, nor can they ever be brought to make a Sound, ſhrill and extenſive enough for their particular Purpoſes; and therefore they conceive, that Braſs, or Silver, or any other Metal had been more convenient for this Uſe; whereupon *(u)* they derive the Word *Jobel*, in the Singular, (which we render a *Ram*'s-*Horn)* not from the *Arabick*, which ſignifies a *Ram*, but from *Jubal*, the Name of him, who was the firſt Inventor of muſical Inſtruments: And, according to this Senſe, the Trumpets, which the Prieſts upon this Occaſion us'd, may be ſaid to have been faſhion'd *according to thoſe, which* Jubal *firſt invented.*

THIS Interpretation of the Words (which is no bad one) removes all the Incongruity, that may ſeem to ariſe from the *Matter*, whereof theſe Trumpets were compos'd: But then, it is to be conſider'd, that, as the firſt Inſtruments of this Kind were probably made of Horns, ſo has the Notion of the Impoſſibility of *boring* a Ram's-Horn been ſufficiently confuted by our learned *Spencer*. The Truth is, every one knows, that in the Inſide of it there is a ſofter Part, which may be drawn out by Art; after which it is hollow all the Way up, except four or five Inches towards the Top, Part of which is ſawed off, to make it broad enough for the Mouth, and then the reſt is eaſily bored. But whether there is any Foundation for that Fancy of the *Jews*, that theſe Horns were retain'd in the Proclamation of ſome of their greateſt Feſtivals, in Memory of *Iſaac*'s being reſcued from his Father *Abraham*'s Knife by the Subſtitution of a *Ram* in his Stead, is a Point that we leave to the Speculations of the Curious. From Joſh i. to the End.

The Taking of it miraculous.

WHATEVER Materials theſe Trumpets were made of, it is impoſſible to conceive, that there ſhould be any Power in their Sound to demoliſh Cities; and tho' the Noiſe of a great Number of People might be very loud, yet ſtill it would require a Miracle in *Joſhua* to know, what the juſt Proportion was between their Noiſe, and the Strength of the Walls of *Jericho*, ſince the leaſt Deviation in this Reſpect would have defeated the whole Experiment.

WHAT the Effect of Gun-powder, or of other ſulphureous Matter fir'd under Ground, or in the Bowels of the Earth, is, no one, that has ſeen either the Springing of a Mine, or felt the Convulſions of an Earthquake, needs be told; but that no Stratagem of this Kind could be employ'd in the Siege of *Jericho*, is manifeſt, becauſe the Invention of Gun-powder is a novel Thing, nor had the *Iſraelites* been long enough on the *weſtern Side* of *Jordan*, to have undermined its Walls, even tho' they had had the Secret of ſome *inflammatory Stratum*, to have lodged under them. On the contrary, the whole Proceſs of this Siege (if we may ſo call it) was manag'd at ſuch a Rate, as plainly diſcover'd an Expectance of a Miracle to be wrought: For had not this been the Caſe, inſtead of ſauntring about the Walls for ſeven Days, they ſhould have been working in their *Trenches*, and *carrying on their Approaches*, as we now call it.

THE Art of War was then but in its Infancy; and, as the Manner of undermining and blowing up the moſt ponderous Bodies was what the Ancients were unacquainted with, ſo was the *Battering-Ram* an Invention of a later Date than ſome imagine. *(x) Pliny* indeed ſeems to ſay, that *Epeus* firſt made Uſe of it at the Siege of *Troy*; but, in all Probability, *(y)*

(u) Maſius in Joſh. vi. 4. *Bochart*'s Hieroſ. lib. ii. c. 43. and *Calmet* in Locum.

(x) Lib. vii. c. 56.

(y) Ezek. iv. 1, 2. and xxi. 22.

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Ezekiel is the earlieſt Author that mentions this Machine, and perhaps the firſt Time that it was employ'd was under *Nebuchadnezzar*, at the Siege of *Jeruſalem*.

But there is no need to ranſack Hiſtory, for the Confutation of this *Syſtem*, which *(z)* they, who propoſe it, do nevertheleſs acknowledge, that, tho' the Walls of *Jericho* might have fallen, without any extraordinary Act of the divine Power, yet, by the Circumſtances of the whole Account, it appears, that this *Event* was altogether miraculous. Nor ſhould *Joſhua*'s denouncing an *Anathema* over the vanquiſh'd City be thought a Thing unprecedented, or a Token of a furious and unplacaple Spirit, ſince the like Practice has been obſerv'd by ſome of the greateſt Generals of other Nations; foraſmuch as *(a) Agamemnon*, after he had taken *Troy*, denounc'd a Curſe upon thoſe, who ſhould, at any Time, attempt to rebuild it; the *Romans* publiſh'd a Decree of *Execration* againſt them, who ſhould do the like to *Carthage*; and when *(b) Craſſus* had demoliſh'd *Sidon*, (which had been a lurking Place to the Tyrant *Glaucias)* he wiſh'd the greateſt Evils imaginable upon the Head of that Man, who ſhould but ſo much as build a Wall about the Place, where it once ſtood.

Joſhua's curſing it no uncommon Thing.

What the Urim *and* Thummim *were.*

Of all the Queſtions in the *Jewiſh* Schools, there is none more difficult, than what we are to underſtand by the *Urim*, and *Thummim*, which *Moſes* takes Notice of, as ſomething belonging to the Attire of the High-Prieſt, and withal enabling him to give Reſponſes to ſuch, as by his Mediation came to conſult God. *(c)* The two Words are variouſly tranſlated; but, in the main, all the Tranſlations amount much to the ſame Purport; and, as this ſacred Thing (be it what it will) was to be plac'd on the High-Prieſt's Breaſt, it very properly reminded him of the great Qualifications, requiſite in thoſe of his Order; *Light*, or Sufficiency of ſpiritual Knowledge; and *Perfection*, or the Virtue and Sanctity of his Life. From Joſh. i. to the End.

The general Opinion indeed is, that this *Urim* and *Thummim* were one and the ſame Thing: But *(d)* an ingenious Writer of our own Nation conceives them to be two different Oracles, and apply'd to different Purpoſes; that *Urim* was the Oracle, whereby God gave Anſwer to thoſe, who conſulted him in *difficult* Caſes, and *Thummim*, that, whereby the High-Prieſt knew whether God did accept the Sacrifice or no; that therefore the former is call'd *Light*, as giving Knowledge, which diſpels the *Darkneſs* of our Minds; and the other *Integrity*, or Perfection, becauſe they, whoſe Sacrifices God accepted, were accounted *Thummim*, i. e. juſt and righteous in his Sight: In ſhort, that by the *former*, the *Jews* were aſcertain'd of the Counſel or Will of God; by the latter, of his Favour and good Acceptance. But this Diſtinction has not met with a general Approbation, becauſe, however, there may be *(e)* Paſſages where the one is mention'd without the other, yet in this Caſe, the one (which is generally the *Urim)* may well enough be ſuppos'd to include both.

The *Jewiſh* Doctors are moſtly of Opinion, that the *Urim* and *Thummim* were nothing elſe, but the precious Stones, which were ſet upon the Breaſt-plate; and that, *(f)* by the ſhining or protuberating of the Letters in the Names of the twelve Tribes, engraven upon the twelve Stones, the High-Prieſt, when he came to conſult God, could read the Anſwer: But, in this Opinion, there are ſome Difficulties hardly to be ſurmounted. For, beſides that all the Letters in the *Hebrew Alphabet* are not to be found on the *Pectoral*, ſince there are four, *viz. Heth*, *Teth*, *Zade*, and *Koph* manifeſtly wanting; *(g)* the Queſtion is, by what Rules the *High-Prieſt* could make a Combination of

(z) P. Merſenne, in his Comment. on *Geneſis*, and *D. Geo. Merhof.* de Scypho Vitreo, per certum humanæ Vocis Tonum fracto. *(a) Strabo*, lib. xiii. p. 898. *(b) Zonaræ* Annal. lib. ix. p. 409. *(c) Edward's* Enquiry into difficult Texts, Part II. *(d) Mede's* Diſcourſe 35. *(e)* Numb. xxvii. 21. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. *(f) Prideaux's* Connection, Part II. lib. iii. *(g) Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Urim.*

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of theſe Letters, (ſuppoſing there were enough of them) and ſo put them together, as to ſpell out the divine Oracle; becauſe it is not pretended that theſe Letters mov'd out of their Places, but only ſwell'd or rais'd themſelves above the reſt? Suppoſe, for Inſtance, that any ſix of theſe Letters ſhould have ſwell'd, or ſhone with more than ordinary Luſtre, yet, how ſhould the High-Prieſt know how to diſpoſe of them in right Order, and which ſhould be firſt, and which laſt? If it be ſaid, By the Spirit of Prophecy: This vacates all the Neceſſity of the *Urim* and *Thummim*; becauſe a prophetick Spirit would teach him what he deſir'd to know, without any farther Aſſiſtance.

(b) CHRISTOPHORUS à Caſtro, and, from him, *(i)* Dr *Spencer* will needs have it, that this *Urim* and *Thummim* were two little *Images*, (much of the ſame Make with the *Gentile Teraphim)* which, being folded in the Doubling of the *Breaſt-Plate*, did from thence give *oracular* Anſwers by an audible Voice, and that this Device was taken from the *Egyptians*. But, beſides that the Word *Teraphim* (to which theſe others were compar'd) is ſeldom or never taken in a *good* Senſe, it ſeems a little improbable, that, in a Matter ſo ſolemn and ſacred, the *Jews* ſhould be left to follow the Examples of the idolatrous *Egyptians*. *(k)* The ſacred Records indeed inform us, that the *Jews* borrow'd of the *Egyptians Jewels of Silver, and Gold, and Raiment*; but they no where intimate, that the *Jewiſh* High-Prieſt borrow'd his *pontifical*, and particularly his *oracular Habit*, from them: And therefore to think, that God, who declares himſelf ſo poſitively againſt the idolatrous Practice of the *Gentiles*, ſhould, by theſe Images of *Pagan* Invention, take the ready Way to give them Countenance and Encouragement; or to think, that the *Jews*, who were expreſsly commanded not to *learn the Way of the Heathen*; and *(l) after the Doings of the Land of* Egypt, *where they had dwelt, not to do*; were permitted, nay, commanded to make uſe of this *magical* and *ſuperſtitious* Rite, is ſuch an Heap of odd and wild Conceits, as no unprejudic'd Mind can ever entertain. From Joſh. i. to the End.

OTHERS therefore are of Opinion, that it was the *Tetagrammaton*, or ineffable Name of God; and others, that it was no more than the two plain Words of *Urim* and *Thummim*, written or engraven on ſome Plate of Gold, or precious Stones, which, when plac'd upon the *Pectoral*, would give it an *oracular* Power: *(m)* But the moſt probable Opinion is, that it was no corporeal Thing at all, but only a certain Virtue (which God was pleas'd to give to the *Breaſt-Plate* at its Conſecration) of obtaining an *oracular* Anſwer from him, whenever the High-Prieſt ſhould put it on in order to aſk Counſel of him, in the Manner that he had appointed; and that the Names of *Urim* and *Thummim* were given it, only to denote the *Clearneſs* and *Perſpicuity*, which thoſe Anſwers of God had, *viz.* that they were not like the *Heathen* Oracles, *enigmatical* and *ambiguous*, but plain and manifeſt, and ſuch, as never fell ſhort of *Perfection*, either in the Fulneſs of the Anſwer, or the Certainty of the Truth of it.

Upon what Occaſions conſulted.

WHETHER this Oracle was only conſulted in the great and important Affairs of the State, or might be advis'd with in Queſtions of a lower Nature, is not entirely determin'd by the *Learned*; but the moſt prevailing Opinion is, that the *High-Prieſt* (who was the only officiating Miniſter in this Ceremony) was not allow'd to addreſs it for any private Perſon, but only for the King, the Preſident of the *Sanhedrim*, the General of the *Army*, or ſome other publick Governor in *Iſrael*; and *that*, not upon any private Affairs, but ſuch only, as related to the publick Intereſt of the Nation, whether in *Church* or *State*.

The Manner of doing it.

WHEN therefore any ſuch Matter happen'd, wherein it was neceſſary to conſult God, the Cuſtom was for the *High-*

(*b*) De Vaticinio. (*i*) Differt. de Urim & Thummim. (*k*) *Edwards*'s Enquiry, Part II. (*l*) Levit. xviii. 3. (*m*) *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. Lib. iii.

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High-Prieſt to put on his Robes and Breaſt-Plate, and ſo preſent himſelf, not within the Veil of the *Holy of Holies*, (for thither he never enter'd, but once a Year, on the great Day of *Expiation)* but without the Veil in the *Holy-Place*, and there ſtanding, with his Face directly towards the Ark, or Mercy-Seat, whereon the divine Preſence reſted, he propounded the Matter; and, at ſome Diſtance behind him, but without the *Holy-Place*, ſtood the Perſon, for whom the Oracle was conſulted, in devout Expectation of the Anſwer, which (as *(n)* it ſeems moſt congruous to the Thing) was given him in an *audible* Voice from the *Mercy-Seat*, which was within behind the *Veil*.

HERE it was that *Moſes* went to aſk Council of God in all Caſes; and from hence he was anſwer'd in an *audible* Voice: And, in like Manner, whenever the High-Prieſt preſented himſelf before God, according to the Preſcription of the divine Law, 'tis reaſonable to believe, that God gave him an Anſwer in the ſame Way that he did *Moſes*, i. e. by an audible Voice from the Mercy-Seat: And for this Reaſon it is, that ſuch Addreſs for Counſel is called *enquiring at the Mouth of God*, and the *Holy of Holies* (the Place where the Mercy-Seat ſtood, and from which the Anſwer was given) is ſo often in Scripture ſtiled *(o) the Oracle*, becauſe from thence were the Oracles of God deliver'd to ſuch, as came to aſk *Counſel* of him.

* SUCH was the ſtanding Oracle, which the *Iſraelites* might have had Recourſe to upon all important Occaſions; and if, in their League with the *Gibeonites*, they were too haſty and precipitate, their Unadviſedneſs is only to be blam'd, and not the Inſufficiency of that Means, which God had appointed for their better Information. The ſhort of the Matter is, the pretended foreign Ambaſſadors drew them in by a Wile and Artifice. The Story of their *old* Shoes and *mouldy* Bread was ſo well contriv'd, and ſeem'd ſo very plauſible, that they took the Thing for granted, as we ſay. *(p) They took of their Victuals*, (as the Text expreſſes it) or receiv'd them, without any farther Enquiry, upon the Account of the Staleneſs of their Proviſion, and *(q) aſked not Counſel of the Mouth of the Lord*; and therefore no Wonder, that God ſhould ſuffer them to be out-witted, when they had an infallible Director ſo near at hand, and yet, in a Matter of ſuch Moment, as that of entering into a *national Treaty*, never once bethought themſelves to conſult him.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

Why the Iſraelites *were out-witted, notwithſtanding they had this* Oracle.

BUT there was a greater Error in their Conduct with Relation to the *Gibeonites*. The Orders and Directions, which God gave them, when they enter'd into a State of War, were to this Effect:—— *(r)* That to all Cities, which, upon their Summons ſurrender'd to them, they were to give Quarter; to ſave their Lives, but, at the ſame Time, to make them their

(n) Prideaux's Connection, Part I. Lib. iii. *(o)* Exod. xxv. 18, 20. Chap. xxxvii. 6. Lev. xvi. 2. 1 Kings vi. 5, &c. 2 Chron. iii. 16. Chap. iv. 20, &c. Pſal. xxviii. 2.

* The *Jewiſh* Doctors think, that the Cuſtom of conſulting God by *Urim* and *Thummim* continu'd no longer than under the *Tabernacle:* For it is a Maxim among them, that the Holy Spirit ſpake to the Children of *Iſrael* by *Urim* and *Thummim*, while the Tabernacle laſted; under the *firſt* Temple, *i. e.* the Temple of *Solomon*, by the Prophets; and under the *ſecond* Temple, or after the Captivity of *Babylon*, by the *Bath-col*, or *Daughter of the Voice*, by which they mean, a Voice ſent from Heaven, ſuch as was heard at our Saviour's *Baptiſm* and *Tranſfiguration*, Matth. iii. 17. Our learned *Spencer* ſeems to have adopted this Opinion, and endeavours to ſupport it by theſe Arguments, *viz.* That the *Urim* and *Thummim* were a Conſequence of the *Theocracy* of the *Hebrews:* For, while the Lord immediately govern'd his People, it was neceſſary that there ſhould always be a *Means* at hand, whereby to conſult him upon Affairs that concern the common Intereſt of the whole Nation; but ſince the *Theocracy* ceas'd, when the Kingdom became *hereditary* in the Perſon and Family of *Solomon*, and the Intereſt of the Nation ceas'd to be common, after the Diviſion of *Iſrael* into two Monarchies, the Oracles of the *Urim* and *Thummim* muſt neceſſarily ceaſe. And accordingly, if we conſult the ſacred Hiſtory, we ſhall meet with no Footſteps of thus applying to God, from the Building of *Solomon*'s Temple, to the Time of its Deſtruction; and after its Deſtruction, all are agreed, that this Oracle was never reſtor'd again. *Spencer* de Urim & Thummim, Cap. 2.

(p) Joſh. ix. 14. *(q)* Ibid. *(r)* Deut. xx. 12, &c.

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their Slaves and Tributaries; but, that to ſuch as ſlighted their Summons, and ſtood upon their Defence, they were not to uſe the ſame Treatment. If they were a *diſtant* Nation, or not belonging to the Country of *Canaan*, upon their taking any Place, they were to *put the Men only to the Sword*, ſparing the Women and Children, and other living Creatures that were found in it; but, if they were a neighbouring or *Canaanitiſh* State, that ſtood out and reſiſted, *they were to deſtroy all* without Exception, and *ſave alive nothing that breath'd*. In the whole, however, there was this Injunction, that of what Country ſoever the People were, and whether they reſiſted, or reſiſted not, the *Iſraelites* were to make no *(s) Covenant with them, nor with their Gods*; and the Reaſon thereof is this —— *(t)* That, as a League between two Nations implies, in the very Notion of it, their having upon ſome Terms given their Faith to each other, to obſerve punctually what had been ſtipulated between them; and, as when ſuch publick Faith was given and taken, the Parties to the Treaty ſwore ſolemnly to each other by their reſpective Gods; the *Iſraelites*, who look'd upon the Gods of theſe Nations as *Vanity and Nothing*, who were oblig'd to *(u) overthrow their Altars, burn their Groves, hew down their Images*, and utterly extirpate their Religion, were totally debarr'd from entering into any Treaty or Alliance with them, becauſe they could not recognize their Idols as Gods, nor take any publick Faith from the Worſhippers of them. For ſo the People ſeem to ſay to the *Gibeonites*, at their firſt Coming into the Camp to propoſe a Treaty, *peradventure you dwell among us*, "are ſome of "thoſe neighbouring Nations, whom we "are order'd to deſtroy, whoſe Gods we "are to drive out, and whoſe Country we "are come to take Poſſeſſion of," *and how ſhall we make a League with you?* "The Interdiction we are under will not "permit us; and therefore, if you pre- "tend to impoſe upon us in this Matter, "the Covenant of courſe is null and inva- "lid; and ſo in Reality it was."

From Joſh. i. to the End.

'TIS reaſonable however to imagine, that, after the Fraud of the *Gibeonites* was diſcover'd, the Princes of *Iſrael* might reflect upon their Neglect, in not conſulting the Divine Oracle before; and, as the Peace, which they had enter'd into, was plainly repugnant to God's Command of exterminating all the *Canaanites*, the Queſtion was, what they ſhould do in this Caſe; whether abide by the Treaty, and ſo poſtpone the Command; or execute the Command, and ſo diſannul the Treaty: The whole Streſs of the Queſtion turns upon this —— *(x)* Whether God commanded the *Iſraelites* to deſtroy all the People of *Canaan* abſolutely, and without Exception; or whether he allow'd them to ſpare ſuch as voluntarily ſubmitted themſelves, and came to implore their Pity and Protection. The Words of the Injunction in this Caſe are full, and expreſs enough; *(y) when thou goeſt nigh unto a City to fight againſt it, then proclaim Peace unto it, and if it make thee Anſwer of Peace, and open unto thee, then ſhall all the People that are found therein be Tributaries to thee, and ſhall ſerve thee.——Thus ſhalt thou do unto all the Cities, which are very far off from thee, and which are not of theſe* Canaanitiſh *Nations. But of the Cities of theſe People, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an Inheritance, thou ſhalt ſave alive nothing that breatheth, but ſhalt utterly deſtroy them, that they teach thee not to do all their Abominations, which they have done to their Gods.* But here ſome great Writers have obſerv'd, that this utter *Extinction* of the *Canaanitiſh* Nations, conſidering the Reaſons that are given for it, both here and *(z)* elſewhere, is to be look'd upon *(a)* as a Permiſſion, rather than a poſitive Command, and ſhould, at leaſt, *(b)* be underſtood with this Limitation;

And why they abode by their Treaty with the Gibeonites.

(s) Exod. xxiii. 32. *(t) Shuckford's* Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii. *(u)* Deut. xii. 3. *(x) Puffendorf*, de Jure Gent. Lib. iv. Cap. 2. Sect. 7. de Juramentis, &c. *(y)* Deut. xx. 10, &c. *(z)* Exod. xxiii. 33. and Deut. vii. 4. *(a) Puffendorf*, ibid. *(b) Grotius*, de Jure Belli, Lib. ii. Cap. 13.

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tion; *unleſs they immediately ſubmitted, renounced their Idolatry, and did every Thing that was enjoined them.* And to this Purpoſe *(c)* the *Jews* have a Tradition, that *Joſhua*, before he declar'd War againſt the ſeven Nations, wrote Letters to them, wherein he offer'd them three Conditions——That, if they were minded to depart, they ſhould quit the Country immediately; if they were deſirious to make Peace, they ſhould come and treat with the *Iſraelites*; but that, if they intended to fight it out, they might betake themſelves to their Arms: And they farther add, that the *firſt* of theſe Conditions the *Girgaſhites* embrac'd, and fled into *Egypt*; the *ſecond* the *Gibeonites* accepted, and made a League with *Joſhua*; and the *third* the confederate Kings made their Choice, when they took up Arms againſt the *Iſraelites*, and were all defeated.

But this is no more than a bare *Hypotheſis*, invented on Purpoſe to ſolve the Difficulty, and ſeems not to have near ſo good a Foundation, as that, which ſuppoſes, that the Princes of *Iſrael*, remembering their former Omiſſion, and their Inſecurity in acting upon their own Bottom, might, in this Perplexity, have Recourſe to God for Advice, and that his Anſwer might be, *that the League ſhould be ratified.* Of this indeed we have no expreſs Mention in Scripture; but in ſo ſhort an Hiſtory of ſuch a Variety of Tranſactions, as that of *Joſhua* is, we may well imagine, that ſeveral Circumſtances may be omitted. For that ſome ſuch Ratification of this Treaty was determin'd by God, we have great Preſumption to believe *(d)* from the ſevere Puniſhment, which he afterwards inflicted upon the *Iſraelites*, and the Poſterity of *Saul*, for his having ſlain ſome of the Deſcendants of theſe *Gibeonites*, (not improbably *(e)* at the ſacking of the Town of *Nob.)* For, tho' this Action of *Saul*'s was cruel and inhumane, becauſe the Decree for the Extirpation of the *Canaanites* was now extinct; yet, what made is more heinous and provoking to God, was, the Infraction of the Treaty, which had ſubſiſted about four Ages, and which coſt the Lives of ſeven of that bloody Prince's Sons, and Grandſons to atone. From Joſh. i. to the End.

The *Heathens*, it muſt be own'd, had no ſmall Reſpect and Veneration for Oaths: Whenever they took one, is was in the moſt ſolemn and religious Manner. *(f)* They look'd upon the Gods as Inſpectors, and Witneſſes of what they ſaid, more eſpecially at ſuch a Time as this. They believ'd that the *Furies* were appointed to be Avengers of all Perjury; and that, as *(g)* Diſgrace attended it in this World, ſo Deſtruction would purſue it in the next. And, as this was the general Notion of moſt heathen Nations, ſo the *Gibeonites*, who had hitherto conceiv'd a good Opinion of the God of *Iſrael*, would have been ſtrangely *ſcandaliz'd*, † had they found his People prevaricating with their Oaths, even tho' they were made upon a falſe Suppoſition. For Fear therefore, leſt any Diſhonour ſhould fall ultimately upon that divine Majeſty, whoſe Servants they were, *the Princes of the Congregation* unanimouſly agree, (and there ſeems to be ſomething of a divine Inſpiration in this their Unanimity) and declare it as their joint Opinion, *(h) We have ſworn unto them by the Lord God of* Iſrael, and therefore, without breaking our Oath, or forfeiting his Favour, *we may not touch them.*

Why the Iſraelites took Offence at their Brethren.

It was the ſame commendable Zeal for the Honour of God, that made the *Iſraelites*, on one Side of *Jordan*, conceive ſuch angry Reſentments againſt their Brethren

(c) *Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur l'Artifice des *Gabaonites*, Vol. III. (d) 2 Sam. xxi. 1, &c. (e) 1 Sam. xxii. 19.
(f) Vid. *Heſiod.* Dies, Ver. 38, &c. (g) Perjurii Pœna Divina Exitium, Humana Dedecus. Cic. de Leg. Lib. ii.

† St *Ambroſe*, treating of this Story, ſpeaks of it in this Manner: —— Joſhua *did not think fit to break the Peace, which he had granted, becauſe it was confirm'd with the awful Solemnity of an Oath, leſt, whilſt he was blaming the Perfidiouſneſs of others, he himſelf ſhould be worſe than his Word, and forfeit his own Honour.* De Officiis, Lib. iii. Cap. 10.

(b) Joſh. ix. 19.

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Brethren on the other, upon Suſpicion, that they had *apoſtatiz'd* from his Worſhip into the Idolatry of the Nations, that were round about them. The two Tribes and an half, upon their Return from the Wars, erected an Altar, in Memory of their Relation to the Tribes and Tabernacle, which they had left behind them. *(i)* This Altar, it ſeems, was of an Height ſomewhat extraordinary; and, as it was the Cuſtom for *Heathens* to worſhip their Gods (which were generally *celeſtial* Bodies) upon High-Places, as preſuming that thereby they made nearer Approaches to them; their Brethren, on the *Weſt Side* of the River, conjectur'd from thence, that this was an Altar rais'd for the Worſhip of the *Sun*, or ſome other *planetary* God. But, if even they were miſtaken in that Conjecture, ſufficient Reaſon they had to ſuſpect, that it was intended for no good Purpoſe, ſince God had expreſsly forbidden them to offer their Sacrifices at any other Place, but the *Tabernacle*, or upon any other Altar, but that, which was built by his Appointment. For theſe are Directions which *Moſes* gives them; *(k) Ye are not yet come to the Reſt, and to the Inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you:* But, when ye ſhall be put in Poſſeſſion of it, *ye ſhall not do after all theſe Things, that we do here this Day, every Man whatſoever is right in his own Eyes; but in the Place which the Lord ſhall chuſe, in one of thy Tribes, there ſhalt thou offer thy Burnt-Offerings; thither ſhalt thou come, and there ſhalt thou do all that I command thee.*

Now when they had ſufficient Reaſon, as they thought, to ſuſpect their Brethren of a Defection into Idolatry, what ſhould they do? Why, herein they punctually follow the Rules, which God himſelf had preſcrib'd them in ſuch a Caſe. *(l) If thou ſhalt hear ſay, in one of thy Cities, which the Lord thy God hath given thee to dwell there, ſaying, Certain Men, the Children of* Belial, *are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the Inhabitants of their City, ſaying, let us go, and ſerve other Gods, (which ye have not known) then ſhalt thou enquire, and make Search, and aſk diligently, and behold, if it be Truth, and the Thing certain, that ſuch Abomination is wrought among you, thou ſhalt ſurely ſmite the Inhabitants of that City with the Edge of the Sword; deſtroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the Cattle thereof, with the Edge of the Sword; and thou ſhalt gather all the Spoil of it into the midſt of the Street thereof, and ſhalt burn with Fire the City, and all the Spoil thereof every whit, for the Lord thy God; and it ſhall be an Heap for ever, it ſhall not be built again.* And if the *Iſraelites* on the *Weſt* of *Jordan*, having this Cauſe of Suſpicion, purſu'd theſe Orders to a Tittle, who ſhall ſay, that they did amiſs, or that their Zeal for God's Glory was raſh and precipitate? They took the propereſt Method (which was ſending an Embaſſy) for the Diſcovery of the Truth; and if, upon Enquiry, their Fears were found to be groundleſs, yet it ſeems to be an Error on the better Side, (as we commonly ſay) and an Inſtance of no contemptible Prudence, in Matters of ſo dangerous a Conſequence, always to ſuſpect the worſt.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

Why the Iſraelites took Offence at their Brethren.

IT may be doubted perhaps, whether the *Iſraelites* were a People of the greateſt Bravery in the World, but it may truly be ſaid, that there was no Neceſſity for their being ſo; becauſe, upon all Occaſions, they had the *Lord of Hoſts* to protect them, and to fight their Battles for them. Supported by his Aid, *(m) how did one of them chaſe a Thouſand, and two put ten Thouſand to Flight; except their Rock had ſold them, and the Lord had ſhut them up?* But when this was the Caſe, no Wonder at all, that *(n) the Hearts of the People melted away, and became like Water.*

Why they were ſometimes dejected.

THE ſhort of the Story was this:—— They had all along hitherto been victorious; had ſubdu'd a Country beyond *Jordan*; paſs'd that River, and conquer'd the *Capital*

(i) *Saurin's* Diſſert. *Joſue renvoie les Reub.* *(k)* Deut. xii. 9, 8, 14, *(l)* Deut. xiii. 12, 13, &c.
(m) Chap. xxxii. 30. *(n)* Joſh. vii. 5.

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tal of the adjacent Province by Miracle: And now, having ſent out a Party to ſummons a ſmall Place to ſurrender, upon the firſt *Sally* that the Inhabitants make, they are all on a ſudden ſeiz'd with a *Panick*, forget their Courage, and flee, without ſo much as ſtriking a Stroke. This they could not but perceive was the Effect of God's Diſpleaſure, and therefore, conſidering themſelves in an Enemy's Country, they had juſt Reaſon to dread, that, if God ſhould deſert them in this Situation of their Affairs, *the People of the Land*, hearing the Report of their Defeat, would come, and (as *Joſhua* expreſſes it) *(o) environ them round, and cut off their Name from the Earth.*

GOOD Reaſon therefore had the *Iſraelites* to be diſconſolate, when they found that God, to whom they ow'd all their Valour and Victories, had forſaken them. But, in the mean Time, how did they behave upon this Occaſion? Why, *they fell to the Earth upon their Knees*, in humble Supplication to God for Mercy; they continu'd all the Day long in faſting and praying, and expreſs'd their Sorrow, and the Senſe of their Unworthineſs with the uſual Tokens of Grief; and was not this better, than to become obdurate under God's afflicting Hand, as were the *Egyptians?* Nay, was not this the very Behaviour, by which the *Ninevites* mov'd the divine Mercy to reverſe the Sentence of Exciſion, that had gone out againſt them? So that, all Things conſider'd, the *Iſraelites*, in this Regard, are not to be blam'd; ſince they, who had loſt the *Rock of their Might*, and had *the Terrors of the Lord ſet in Array againſt them*, were far *from fearing, where no Fear was.*

AND, in like Manner, if, to the Reaſons, we have already alledg'd for their Conduct at *Jericho*, we add this one Conſideration, *viz.* that they were juſt now entering upon their Conqueſts; that this was the firſt City they had taken on the *Weſt-Side* of *Jordan*; and that the People, they had to contend with, were to be terrify'd into Submiſſion, rather than intreated; we cannot but be of this Opinion, that an Example or two of *high Severity*, at the firſt ſetting out, was no leſs than neceſſary to reduce the Country more ſpeedily, and with a leſs Effuſion of Blood; as well as to verify the Promiſe of him, who appointed them; *(p) This Day will I begin to put the Dread of thee, and the Fear of thee upon the Nations, that are under the whole Heaven, who ſhall hear Report of thee, and ſhall tremble, and be in Anguiſh becauſe of thee.*

From Joſh. i. to the End.

WITHOUT entering therefore into any farther Vindication of the *Jewiſh* Nation, we may ſafely ſay, that, in the Caſes we have had under Conſideration, they were neither *zealous* nor *timorous*, nor *cruel* without a Cauſe; that, in the *firſt* of theſe Caſes, they expreſs'd their Concern for God's Honour; in the *ſecond*, their Dread of his departing from them; and in the *third*, their Obedience to his Command.

The Caſe of Achan's *Children enquir'd into.*

IT is a Law of God's own enacting, that *(q) the Fathers ſhall not be put to Death for the Children, neither ſhall the Children be put to Death for the Fathers, but every Man ſhall be put to Death for his own Sin:* But then we are to conſider, that this Law was given to Man, and not to God, who has certainly a more abſolute Right and Sovereignty over Men, than one Man has over another. That, as the *Iſraelites*, at this Time, liv'd under a *Theocracy*, and, in a proper Senſe, had God, for their *civil* Governor, every wilful Tranſgreſſion (ſuch as *Achan*'s was) muſt have been deem'd not only a Violation of the Divine Command, but a Crime of *leſs Majeſty* likewiſe; and that, in Crimes of this Kind, the Practice of all * Governments, *ancient*, as well as *modern*, has been, to make Children

(o) Joſh. vii. 9. (p) Deut. ii. 25. (q) Deut. xxiv. 16.

* Thus *Cicero*, to excuſe the Confiſcation, decreed againſt *Lepidus*, which affected his Children, the Nephews of *Brutus*, has theſe Words ——— *Neque vero me fugit, quam ſit acerbum, Parentum ſcelera Filiorum Pœnis lui: Sed* hoc Præclare Legibus comparatum eſt, *ut Charitas liberorum amiciores Parentes Reipublicæ redderet. Ad* Brutum *Liber* 1. *Epiſt.* 12. And again, ——— *In quâ videtur eſſe crudele, quod ad Liberos, qui nihil meruerunt, Pœna pervenit*; ſed & id antiquum eſt, & omnium Civitatum. Ep. 15. *Warburton*'s Divine Legation, Vol. III. Lib. 5.

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dren ſuffer for the Iniquity of the Parent (as in Caſes of *Attaint* of Blood, and *Confiſcation* of Eſtate) and that, with the Reputation of the higheſt *Equity*. Upon the Suppoſition then that *Achan*'s Family were not acceſſary to their Father's Crime, yet God, who gave them Life, had undoubtedly a full Power to take it away, at what Time, or in what Manner, he thought fit; and, if in Caſes of *High-Treaſon* among Men, it is thought reaſonable to devolve ſome Part of the Parents Penalty upon the Children, there is this farther Argument why *Achan*'s Family ſhould be made to ſuffer with him, becauſe God could not expreſs his Severity againſt Sin, nor take their Lives away, at a more convenient Opportunity, than in the Beginning of a *New Empire*, and when each Man's Right and Property was going to be ſettled; that ſuch a dreadful Example of his Indignation againſt *Stealth* might deter others, if not for their own, at leaſt for their *dear* Children's Sake, to abſtain from ſuch dangerous and pernicious Practices. *(r)* The *Jews* have a Maxim, *that he, who is an Accomplice in any Crime, is as culpable as the Perſon who commits it*; and therefore, if we ſuppoſe, that *Achan*'s Family was privy to what their Father had done, and did conceal it, there could be no Injuſtice in including them in the Puniſhment. It may be pretended perhaps, that ſome of them were *Infants*, and ſo muſt be deem'd innocent; but the Text ſays nothing of this: It only calls them *(s)* *Sons* and *Daughters*, and conſidering that *Achan*, in all Probability, was an old Man, *(t)* as being the *fifth* Deſcendant from *Judah*, it ſeems moſt likely, that his Children *(u)* were grown up, and ſo capable of knowing, and of either concealing, or diſcovering the Fact.

BUT, after all, there is no Occaſion for our running ourſelves into any Difficulty. The Text does not ſay, neither is it any ways imply'd, that *Achan*'s *Sons and Daughters* were executed with him. In the Sentence denounc'd againſt him, we find no Mention made of them, and why then ſhould we ſuppoſe, that they were Partakers in his Puniſhment, any other ways, than as they were *brought out* to be *Spectators* of it? And a piercing Sight, no doubt, it was, for Perſons ſo nearly related to behold the ſad Fate of their *Chief*, firſt ſton'd to Death, and then, with all his Goods and Chattels, as well as thoſe accurs'd Things, for which he was condemn'd, committed to the Flames. *His Oxen, and Aſſes, and Sheep* are here taken Notice of, to let us ſee, that *Achan* was a *wealthy* Man, and therefore inexcuſable in committing this Fact: And, tho' they were not capable of Sin, nor conſequently, of Puniſhment properly ſo call'd; yet, as they were made for Man's Uſe, they might fairly die for his Inſtruction, *viz.* to convince him of the ſad and contagious Nature of Sin, which even involves innocent Creatures in its Plagues; and *emblematically* to ſhew him, how much ſorer Puniſhments are reſerv'd for Man, who, having a Law given for the Conduct of his Life, and the Gifts of *Reaſon* and *Will* to reſtrain him from the Tranſgreſſion of it, will adventure upon Things forbidden, and thereby contract greater Guilt, and draw upon himſelf ſeverer Expreſſions of the Divine Wrath.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

GOD indeed ſtiles himſelf *the Lord of Hoſts*, and had ſo immediate an Hand in the Conduct of *Iſrael*, that every *military* Atchievement of theirs might very properly be aſcrib'd to him: But when he order'd *Joſhua (x) to go up againſt* Ai, *and to lay an Ambuſcade behind it*, he might, notwithſtanding this, leave the whole Glory of the Invention and Execution of it to him, as an able and expert *General*; for, if he had always wrought Miracles in Favour of his People, and left nothing for *Joſhua* to perform, we cannot ſee, how he could have merited the Character of an extraordinary Man.

The Stratagem againſt Ai, Joſhua's *own.*

(r) *Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur le Crime, &c. de Achan. (s) Joſh. vii. 24. (t) Ibid. Ver. 1. (u) *Pool*'s Annotations. (x) Joſh. viii. 2.

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IN other Events, where the *whole* may be ſaid to be under the Guidance of God, he takes Care to direct every Particular of the Tranſaction. In paſſing the River *Jordan*, and ſurrounding the Walls of *Jericho*, he preſcribes the Form and Order of the People's March, and how, upon every Occaſion, they were to behave; but here, in the Affair of *Ai*, he contents himſelf with merely ſuggeſting the *Means*, as Things that *Joſhua* was no Stranger to, and leaves to him the Contrivance and Application of them. This Stratagem indeed is the firſt, that we find any mention of in Scripture; but we muſt not from thence infer, that there was never any before put in Execution. The Art of War began very ſoon, and was carry'd on, no doubt, with great Application. The whole Excellence of its Management conſiſts in circumventing, and doubling upon the Enemy with Dexterity; and therefore no Queſtion, but that the Wits of Mankind were always employ'd in taking the Advantage of each other, and in gaining a Victory with the leaſt Expence of Blood on their own Side. *(y)* The *Romans* fell frequently into the Snares, which were laid for them, becauſe their *Generals* were Men of no military Skill; and therefore, to excuſe their Ignorance, they alledg'd, that they made War, like *honeſt Men*, without Deceit or Artifice: And if *Alexander* diſclaim'd the Uſe of Stratagems, it was, becauſe he knew the Cowardiſe of his Enemies, and how eaſy a Matter it was to gain a Conqueſt in the fair and open Field. For, it is not to be doubted, but that had he been to attack any other Nation, except the effeminate *Perſians*, he would have taken his Friend *Parmenio*'s Advice, and (without bluſhing at a Victory obtain'd by good Management) fallen upon his Enemy under the Cover of the Night.

HOWEVER this be, that Stratagems are lawful in War we have good Preſumption to think from God's directing *Joſhua* to make Uſe of one; and tho' he does not (as other Warriors do) employ any of *theſe* at a Pinch, or becauſe he cannot accompliſh his Deſigns without them; tho' he could, with one ſingle Act of his Will, have deſtroy'd the City of *Ai*, and all the Inhabitants thereof, and without ſuffering his People to ſtrike one Blow, have put them in Poſſeſſion of the promis'd Land; yet, chuſing to act by *ſecondary* Means, he proceeded in the ordinary Way, and, leaving a good deal to *Joſhua*'s Skill and Management, aſſiſted him only at ſome *critical* Conjuncture, that by a Prolongation of the War, the Reputation of his People might be rais'd, and more frequent Opportunities occur, for the Diſplay of his miraculous Works.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

(z) JOSEPHUS indeed ſeems not to have conſulted the Honour of *Joſhua* much, when he aſcribes the Delay of the Conqueſt of *Canaan* to the *Weakneſs* of his Army, and the *impregnable* Strength of the Places, he was to attack: But *(a)* ſome other *Jews* make the Matter much worſe, when they tell us, that he deſir'd to prolong the War, not only to retain the Office and Dignity of being *Captain-General*, but becauſe he was inform'd by the Oracle, that, as ſoon as the Conqueſt was finiſh'd, he himſelf was to die. God however ſeems to have given us much better Reaſons for this Retardation, when he acquaints *Moſes* with his Intention: *(b) I will not drive the* Canaanites *out from before thee in one Year, leſt the Land become deſolate, and the Beaſts of the Field multiply againſt thee*; and, when he complains of their ſad Defection, after the Death of *Joſhua*, *(c) I will not henceforth drive out any from before them, of the Nations, which* Joſhua *left when he died, that through them I may prove*, Iſrael, *whether they will keep the Way of the Lord, to walk therein, as their Fathers did keep it, or no:* Whereupon the Hiſtorian tells us, that God accordingly *did leave theſe Nations, without driving them out*; and adds another Reaſon for their Continuance in the Country, *viz.*

Why God gave not the Iſraelites *the Poſſeſſion of all* Canaan.

(y) *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Ai*. (z) Antiq. lib. v. c. 1. (a) Vid. *Schotan.* Biblioth. Vet. & Nov. Teſt. Vol. II. p. 402. (b) Exod. xxiii. 29, 30. (c) Judg. ii. 21, 22.

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viz. that the *Iſraelites*, by having an Enemy to contend with, might be train'd up in the Art and Myſtery of War: For *(d) theſe are the Nations*, ſays he, *which the Lord left to prove* Iſrael, *that by them they might teach thoſe War, who before knew nothing of it.* So that here are three Reaſons given us, why God delay'd the entire Subjection of *Canaan*; viz. becauſe the Children of *Iſrael* were, as yet, too few in Number to repleniſh the whole Country; becauſe God, by keeping the *Canaanites* in Being, was willing both to make Trial of his People's Obedience, and to train them, and their Poſterity, for ſome Ages, up in military Diſcipline and Exerciſe.

BUT there is another Reaſon which *Joſhua*, in his dying Speech, aſſigns for their not enlarging their Conqueſts to the utmoſt Bounds, which God had given them: *(e) Take good Heed therefore*, ſays he, *unto yourſelves, that ye love the Lord your God; elſe, if you do in any wiſe go back, and cleave unto the Remnant of theſe Nations, even theſe that remain among you, and ſhall make Marriages with them, and go in unto them, and obey to you; know for a Certainty, that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of theſe Nations from before you.*

So that the Promiſe, which God made to the *Iſraelites*, was *conditional*; and, as they manifeſtly falſify'd their Part of the Obligation, by engaging firſt in Affinity, and then in Idolatry with the Nations, which they were bound to deſtroy; ſo God might very well think himſelf releas'd from *his*, and under no farther Concern for their Succeſs, or the Enlargement of their Conqueſt; *(f)* but, as they had been the *Miniſters* of his Vengeance, in puniſhing the Diſorders of the *Canaanites*, they, in their Turn, were now made the *Inſtruments* of his chaſtiſing the Diſobedience of his own People: *(g) They ſhall be Snares and Traps to you, and Scourges in your Sides, and Thorns in your Eyes, until ye periſh from the good Land, which the Lord your God hath given you.* From Joſh. i. to the End.

AND indeed, if we conſider how violently, in After-Ages, the *Iſraelites* were oppreſs'd by their Enemies, and, by many Battles and Captivities, harraſs'd and diminiſh'd in their Numbers, we ſhall find no Neceſſity of enlarging their Poſſeſſions; becauſe the Country, which they conquer'd, in the firſt ſix Years, was ſpacious enough to contain them. *(h)* The Promiſe however, which God made, was ſufficiently accompliſh'd in the Reigns of *David* and *Solomon*, when the Kingdom of *Iſrael* was in its *Zenith*; and tho' its *Territories* did not extend to the *Euphrates*, yet its *Dominion* did, ſince all that Tract of Land between *Jeruſalem* and that great River was either *ſubdu'd*, or made *tributary* to them.

UPON the whole therefore it is evident, that the Author of the Book of *Joſhua*, (be he who he will) in the three Inſtances, which we have been conſidering, has left no Imputation upon God; foraſmuch as tho' he commanded *Achan* to be put to Death, yet it does not appear, that his Children ſuffer'd with him; or if they did, there is Preſumption to believe that they were Accomplices in his Crime: Tho' he order'd the Taking of *Ai* by a *Stratagem*, yet the whole Form and Contrivance of it he left to the *General*; and tho' the *Iſraelites* did not actually poſſeſs all, that he had promis'd them, yet this was occaſion'd by their own Diſobedience and Cowardiſe, and the Falſification of thoſe *Conditions*, upon which the full Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan* was ſuſpended.

How the Ark may be ſaid to have been, at this Time, at Shechem.

THERE is but one Objection more, in the Courſe of this Period, which is uſually alledg'd againſt the ſacred Hiſtory, and that is, the ſeeming Contradiction of the *Ark*'s being ſaid to be at *Shechem*, when it was, in Reality, at *Shiloh*: But, in Anſwer to this, ſome have imagin'd, that, as *Joſhua* was now grown old and infirm, the

(d) Judg. iii. 1, 2. *(e)* Joſh. xxiii. 11, &c. *(f)* *Saurin*'s Diſſert. Vol. III. Diſſert. 10. *(g)* Joſh. xxiii. 13. *(h)* *Pool*'s Annotations.

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the *Ark*, *(i)* upon this Occaſion, was remov'd from *Shiloh*, the ſettled Place of the divine Reſidence, to *Shechem*, the Place of *Joſhua*'s Habitation, that he might, with greater Solemnity, and in the Preſence of God, (whereof the Ark was the proper *Emblem)* deliver his *Charge* to the People. But other learned Men have obſerv'd, that, *(k) by the Sanctuary of the Lord*, we are to underſtand, not the *Ark of the Covenant*, but only ſome certain Place of religious Worſhip, ſuch, very probably, as the *Jewiſh Oratories* were. That the holy Ark was not, on this Occaſion, ſet up here at *Shechem*, is evident, *they ſay*, from that Prohibition given by God, *(l) Thou ſhalt not plant a Grove of any Trees, near unto the Altar of the Lord thy God, which thou ſhalt make thee, neither ſhalt thou ſet up a Pillar, which the Lord thy God hateth:* Whereas, in this *Sanctuary*, we read both of an *Oak* planted, and a *Pillar*, or Statue, erected under it; which is certainly ſuch a Violation of the divine Command, as *Joſhua*, upon no Occaſion, can be ſuppos'd capable of incurring. *(m)* 'Tis a very probable Opinion therefore, that the Place, where *Joſhua* ſet up this *monumental* Pillar, was one of thoſe, which the Tribe of *Ephraim* (to whom *Shechem* belong'd) had conſecrated, and ſet apart for a *Proſeucha*, or a Place to aſſemble in for publick Prayer; and that they made choice of this, rather than any other to perform their Devotions in, becauſe it was that particular *Spot*, where God appear'd to *Abraham*, and promis'd his Poſterity the Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*.

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* That there were ſuch *Oratories*, or Places of publick Prayer, among the *Jews*, and that they were generally beſet, or ſhaded

(i) *Pool*'s Annot. and *Patrick*'s Com. *(k)* Joſh. xxiv. 26. *(l)* Deut. xvi. 21, 22. *(m)* *Mede*'s Diſ. 18.

* *Epiphanius*, who was a *Jew* bred, and born in *Paleſtine*, ſpeaking of ſome Hereticks, (Lib. i. Hæreſ. 61.) whom he calls *Meſſalians*, and who, according to his Account, where neither *Jews*, *Chriſtians*, nor *Samaritans*, but *Pagans*, tells us, that they, nevertheleſs, pretended to worſhip the one true God, and for that Purpoſe, *had certain open Places, which they called* Proſeuchæ. And *that the Jews* (as alſo the *Samaritans) had Places for religious Worſhip of the ſame Denomination*, he proves from the Acts of the Apoſtles, (Chap. xvi. 13.) where Lydia *is ſaid to have met St* Paul, *and to have heard him preach in that Place*, which, ἐδόκει τόπῳ προσευχῆς εἶναι, *ſeem'd to be a Place of Prayer. There is alſo at* Shechem, *(which is now called* Neapolis) continues he, *about a Mile without the City) a* Proſeucha, *a Place of Prayer, like a Theatre, which was built in the open Air, and without a Roof, by the* Samaritans, *who affected to imitate the* Jews *in all Things. Juvenal*, in his 3d Satire, deſcribing the Manner, in which ſome wild young Fellows were wont, in their drunken Frolicks, to affront and abuſe every poor Man, they met in the Streets in the Night-Time, brings them in ſpeaking thus: Ede, ubi conſiſtas, in quâ te quæro Proſeuchâ? Sat. III.
Whereby he either intimates, that he was ſome poor Wretch, who dwelt in an Houſe, that could not keep out Wind and Weather, but, like the *Jewiſh Proſeuchæ*, was all open above; or he alludes to the State of the *Jews* at that Time, who were baniſh'd out of *Rome* by *Domitian*, and had no Place of Shelter, but their *Oratories*, which were without the Walls of the City. For, that the *Jews* had their *Proſeuchæ* about the City of *Rome* is evident from that Paſſage in *Philo*, (de Legatione ad Caium) wherein he commends the Clemency and Moderation of *Julius Cæſar*, who knew that the *Jews* had ſuch Places of publick Worſhip, where they always aſſembled on the *Sabbath-Day*, and yet gave them no Moleſtation, as *Caius* had done. *Joſephus* (in his Life, Sect. 54.) makes mention of a *Proſeucha* at *Tiberias* in *Galilee*, and, in ſeveral Places in the *New Teſtament*, the ſame Term is made uſe of in the ſame Signification. Vid. *Mede*'s Diſcourſe 18. But then the Queſtion is, whether it be not a Miſtake in ſome learned Men, to apply an Uſage, that is mention'd at ſuch and ſuch a Time, to a People who liv'd many Ages before.

Philo Judæus, (de Legat. ad Caium) ſpeaking of the barbarous Outrage of ſome *Gentiles* againſt the *Jews*, dwelling then at *Alexandria*, acquaints us, *that, of ſome of their* Proſeuchæ, *they cut down the Trees, and others they demoliſh'd to the very Foundations.* The Poet *Juvenal* alludes to the very ſame Cuſtom of having Trees planted where the *Jewiſh* Oratories were, when, ſpeaking of a Fortune-Teller of that Nation, he thus deſcribes her:

Arcanum Judæa tremens mendicat in Aurem,
Interpres Legum Solymarum, magna Sacerdos
Arboris, & ſummi Fida Internuncia Cœli. Sat. VI.

And, in another Place, complaining, that through the Corruption of the Times, the once ſacred Grove of *Capenæ*, which had formerly been the Habitation of the *Muſes*, and the Place, where *Numa* was wont to meet the Goddeſs *Ægeria*, was now let out to the beggarly *Jews* for a *Proſeucha*, his Expreſſions are theſe:

Hic, ubi Nocturnæ Numa conſtituebat Amicæ,
Nunc, ſacri Fontis Nemus, & Delubra locantur
Judeis; quorum Cophinus, Fœnumque Supellex.
Omnis enim Populo Mercedem pendere juſſa eſt
Arbor, & ejectis mendicat Sylva Camænis. Sat. III.

For it is hard to conceive, what Affinity there ſhould be between *Jews* and Trees, unleſs it be from the Cuſtom, that their own *Oratories* were uſually ſhaded with them.

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ſhaded with Trees, is evident from ſuch a Variety of Teſtimonies, that it can hardly be conteſted; but, whether they were of ſo early a Date, as *Joſhua*'s Time, or not rather introduc'd after the Captivity of *Babylon*, is a Queſtion not eaſy to determine. In the *main* however we may conclude, that, whether the *Ark of the Covenant* was *occaſionally* brought to *Shechem*, or at *Shechem* there happen'd to be ſuch an *Oratory*, as, in After-Ages, became frequent in *Judea*, there can be no Incongruity in the ſacred *Penman*'s ſaying, that the *Sanctuary of the Lord* (ſince either the *Ark*, or the *Oratory* might merit that Name) was at *Shechem*. There is another Solution however of this Difficulty, which ought not to be diſregarded. † *Shechem* and *Shiloh* were about twelve Miles diſtant from each other, and, in the Mid-Way between them, was *Timnah-Serah*, the Place where *Joſhua* liv'd. Since therefore the Text informs us, that *(n) he gathered all the Tribes of* Iſrael *to* Shechem, *and calls for their Elders, for their Heads, for their Judges, and for their Officers, and they preſented themſelves before God*; we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, that tho' all the People met at *Shechem*, yet their *Elders* and chief *Officers* only *preſented themſelves* before God. That ſo great a Multitude could not meet together, and encamp in any Place, but where there is a proportionable Compaſs of Ground, is a Matter ſelf-evident; and that, in the Confines of *Shechem*, there was a large and open Country, extending perhaps as far as *Shiloh*, and very commodious for their Reception, we have the Atteſtation of holy Writ. But then, ſince it is impoſſible for one Man to ſpeak to ſuch a Number of People and be heard, *Joſhua*, very probably ſingled out the chief and principal of them, ſuch as he foreſaw would ſucceed him in the Government after his Demiſe, and theſe he took with him to *Shiloh*, a Place in the Neighbourhood, where was the Ark, or *Sanctuary of the Lord*, that he might there with the greater Solemnity, give them his final Charge, which they in their Turns, might deliver to their reſpective Tribes.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

THUS we have endeavour'd to ſatisfy the ſeveral *Objections*, which are uſually made againſt ſome Paſſages in the *ſacred* Hiſtory, during the Government of *Joſhua*: And if profane Teſtimonies would be of any Force, we might produce the Accounts, which their Hiſtorians give us of *Neptune*'s drying up the River *Inachus*, and of *Agamemnon*'s denouncing a Curſe againſt any one, that ſhould repair *Troy*, to juſtify the Narrative we have in Scripture of the miraculous Paſſage of *Jordan*, and the Reſentment and Indignation, which *Joſhua* conceiv'd againſt *Jericho*. The antient *Hercules* was certainly the ſame with *Joſhua*. He is ſaid to have wag'd War in Behalf of the Gods, againſt *Typhœus*, and the reſt of the *Giants* of old, even as *Joſhua fought the Battles of the Lord* againſt the Inhabitants of *Canaan*, Men of a vaſt Stature, and, at that Time, under the Diſpleaſure of Heaven. In Conformity to the ſacred Record of God's deſtroying the confederate Army of the *Amorites* with Hail-ſtones, the ancient Heathens ſay, that *Hercules* was *thus* aſſiſted in his War againſt the Sons of *Neptune*; and *Plutarch*, in his Life of *Timoleon*, tells us, that a terrible Storm of Hail, in the Face of the *Carthaginian* Army, gave him (tho' he had but very few Forces to encounter them) a compleat Victory over them. *The Sun's ſtanding ſtill* is no new Story: *Callimachus (o)* repreſents him, as ſtopping the Wheels of his Chariot to hear the Melody of a *Chorus* of *Nymphs*, wherewith he was ſo delighted, that it made him prolong the Day; and, tho' they are miſtaken in the Cauſe, yet the antient Poets diſcover a Tradition of this

Moſt of theſe Things confirm'd by Heathen *Teſtimony.*

† *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii.

(n) Joſh. xxiv. 1.

(o) His Words are theſe:

Θεὸς ἅπαὶ ἐκεῖνον
Ἦλθε παὶρ Ἥλιον καλὸν χόρον· ἀλλὰ θέτα
Δίφρον ἐπιστάσας τὰ δὶ φάεα μηκύνδαι. Callimachus in Dianam.

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miraculous Event, * when they deſcribe the Heaven's bluſhing, and the Sun's ſtanding ſtill, at the Sight of the *unnatural* Murther which *Atreus* committed. For if *Statius* miſtake not, this bloody Fact happen'd in the Time of the *Theban* War, which, according to the beſt *Chronologiſts*, was much about the Time of *Joſhua*'s Conqueſt of *Canaan*. But even ſuppoſing *Statius*, or any other Author from whom he took the Hint, are miſtaken in their *Chronology*, * the Time of *Phaëton*'s Life (whoſe Story of miſguiding the Chariot of the Sun, is ſuppos'd to take its Riſe from hence) will ſynchronize with the Year of the Sun's ſtanding ſtill in the Days of *Joſhua*. So that, as to the moſt wonderful Tranſactions, which, in this Space of Time, we meet with in holy Writ, *God has not left himſelf without a Witneſs*; foraſmuch as the heathen Writers (tho' with ſome Variation or Diſguiſe, according to the Humour of their *Mythologiſts*) are known to relate the ſame Things.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

DISSERTATION I.

Of the Shower of Stones, and the Sun's ſtanding ſtill.

The former of theſe Miracles.

OF all the miraculous Things, that happen'd in *Joſhua*'s Wars with the People of *Canaan*, the *Shower* of Stones, which God ſent upon his Enemies, while they fled, and the *Stop*, which he put to the Courſe of the Sun, that he might have a longer Space to deſtroy them in their Flight, are the moſt remarkable, and do therefore deſerve a more particular Conſideration.

THE former of theſe Events the ſacred Hiſtory repreſents in this Manner ——*(p) And it came to paſs, that as they* (viz. the Army of the *Amorites) fled from before* Iſrael, *and were in the going down to* Beth-horon, *the Lord caſt down great Stones from Heaven upon them unto* Azekah, *and they died. They were more, which died of the Hail-Stones, than they, which the Children of* Iſrael *ſlew with the Sword.* But the Difference among *Commentators* is, whether we are to underſtand this Miracle of a Shower of Stones, properly ſo call'd, or of a Shower of Hail.

Not effected with ſolid Stones.

THE learned *Calmet*, in a *Diſſertation* prefix'd to his *Commentary* upon *Joſhua*, has taken a great deal of Pains to ſhew, that the Stones, which *the Lord* is ſaid to have *caſt upon the* Amorites, were not ordinary Hail-Stones, (ſince it would be incongruous, as he thinks, to intereſt God in ſo common an Occurrence) but *real ſolid Stones*, which he ſuppoſes might have been engender'd in the Air by a Whirl-wind carrying up Sand or Gravel into a Cloud, and there mixing it with ſome ſuch *oily* or *nitro-ſulphureous* Matter, as might conſolidate, and form it into a combuſtible Body; that ſo, when, by frequent Agitation, it came to be fir'd, it might burſt through the Cloud, and, ſcattering itſelf upon the *Exploſion*, might fall down upon the Earth in the Nature of a perfect Shower of Stones.

THAT great Quantities of Stones have, in this Manner, been diſcharg'd from the Clouds, is evident from ſeveral Hiſtories. *Diodorus Siculus (q)* informs us, that, as the

* Tardius humenti Noctem dejecit Olympo
Jupiter, & Verſum miti, reor, Æthera curâ
Suſtinuit, dum Fata vetant; nec longius unquàm
Ceſſavere novæ, perfecto ſole, Tenebræ. *Statius* Theb. lib. i. & v.

* The Sun ſtood ſtill in the Days of *Joſhua*, A. M. 2554, when *Phaëton* was about Twenty-four Years old, an Age, of Ambition enough to deſire, tho' not of Ability to execute, the difficult Province, which he undertook. *Shuckford*'s Connection, Vol. III. Lib. xii.

(p) Joſh. x. 11. *(q)* Vol. II. lib. xi.

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the *Perſian* Army was on their March to plunder the Temple at *Delphos*, Thunder and Lightning, and a violent Storm of Stones fell in their Camp, and deſtroy'd a great Number of Men. *(r)* In the Reign of *Tullus Hoſtilius*, when News was brought to the Government, that it had rain'd Stones upon Mount *Alba*, thoſe who were ſent to enquire into the Matter, brought Word, not only that the Fact was true, but that theſe Stones had fallen from the Skies with an Impetuoſity equal to the moſt violent Storm of Hail. *(s)* Not long after the Battle at *Cannæ*, the ſame Author aſſures us, that a Storm of the ſame Kind fell on the ſame Mountain, which laſted for two whole Days; and Events of this Nature, atteſted by the beſt Authors, have been ſo frequent at *Rome*, at *Capua*, at *Livinium*, and ſeveral other Places in *Italy*, that a Man muſt be deſtitute of all Modeſty, who pretends to deny them abſolutely.

NAY, not only great Quantities of *ſmaller* Stones, but ſometimes Stones of a *prodigious* Size have been known to fall from the Clouds, whereof this learned Author, *(t)* among many others, gives us ſeveral Inſtances, both of *antient* and *modern* Date. But then it is juſtly to be queſtion'd, whether theſe Authors have not ſuffer'd themſelves to be impos'd on by the too confident Narrations of others. We may ſuppoſe indeed, that *Whirlwinds*, or *Hurricanes* may raiſe the Sand or Gravel, and carry it on high, or ſome ſudden Irruptions of ſubterraneous Fire may diſcharge great Quantities of Cinders, or Aſhes into the Air, where, meeting with ſome *Exhalations* of a *ſulphureous*, *oily*, or *nitroline* Quality, they may, by the Preſſure of the Clouds, be condens'd, and harden'd into a ſtony Subſtance; yet, how any Cloud ſhould be able to ſupport ſuch a Quantity of *ſmaller* Stones, much more of vaſt *maſſy* ones, as would be neceſſary to deſtroy the Army of the five confederate Kings, and to continue falling down upon them from *Bethhoron* to *Azekah*, Places which lay in different Tribes, and can hardly be ſuppos'd leſs than twelve or fourteen Miles diſtant (to ſay nothing of the many *Apertures* in the Earth, which muſt have been ſeen afterwards in theſe Parts, upon Suppoſition that the Thing was effected by *Vulcanos)* is a Matter not altogether ſo credible.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

THE Truth is, there is no Reaſon for carrying this Miracle ſo high; ſince a Shower of *Hail-Stones* will not only do the Work every whit as well, but ſeems to be the genuine Import of *Joſhua*'s Words; who, having acquainted us, that *the Lord caſt down great Stones* upon the *Amorites*, adds, by Way of Explication, *that they were more that died by the Hail-Stones, than by the Sword*; where it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that had there been *great* Stones, as well as Hail, the Death of the greater Number of thoſe that periſh'd, would not have been attributed to the *Hail* only.

But Hail-Stones *only*.

IT is ſome Confirmation of this Expoſition, that we find the *Septuagint*, in both Places of the Text, tranſlating it Λίθος Χαλάζης, which *Joſephus (u)* calls *a violent Tempeſt of Hail-Stones of a prodigious Size*; and the Author of *(x) Eccleſiaſticus* thus recounts the whole Matter; *with Hail-Stones of a mighty Power, he made the Battle to fall violently upon the Nations, and, in the Deſcent* of Bethhoron, *he deſtroy'd them that reſiſted.*

THE Prophet *Ezekiel*, in his Predictions againſt *Gog*, introduces God, as threatning, that *(y) he would plead againſt him with Peſtilence, and with Blood, with an overflowing Rain, and great Hail-Stones, Fire, and Brimſtone:* And, in another Place, ſpeaking of falſe Prophets, who ſeduc'd his People into an Opinion of their Security, as if they had been fortify'd within a Wall, he purſues the *Metaphor*, and tells thoſe who *daubed it* with *untemper'd Mortar, (z) that it ſhould fall*; *for*

(r) *Liv.* Lib. i. Dec. 1. (s) Ibid. lib. 25, 30, 34. (t) See *Saurin*'s Diſſert. likewiſe, who has given us a large Account hereof. (u) Antiq. lib. v. c. 1. (x) Chap. xlvi. 6. (y) Chap. xxxviii. 22. (z) Ezek. xiii. 11.

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for there ſhall be an overflowing Shower, ſays he, *and ye, O great Hail-Stones, ſhall fall, and a ſtormy Wind ſhall rent it.* So that from theſe, and ſeveral other Paſſages of the like Nature, we may learn, that, in executing his Judgments upon the Face of the Earth, *Hail-Stones* are very frequently *Arrows* in the Hands of the Almighty: And of what Force they are to do Execution, we are advertiz'd in what befel the *Egyptians*, when (as the ſacred Hiſtory has related it) *(a) the Lord ſent Thunder and Hail, and the Fire ran upon the Ground: And the Lord rained Hail upon the Land of* Egypt; *ſo there was Hail, and Fire mingled with Hail, very grievous, ſuch as there was none like it in all the Land of* Egypt, *ſince it became a Nation. And the Hail ſmote, throughout all the Land of* Egypt, *all that was in the Field, both Man and Beaſt: It ſmote every Herb of the Field, and brake every Tree of the Field.* Nor are there Examples of a later Date wanting (eſpecially in our *Philoſophical* Tranſactions) of the vaſt Havock and Deſtruction, that Hail-Stones (from *(b) one* to *five* Pounds Weight) have done in ſeveral Places; killing both Man and Beaſt, and laying the whole Country waſte, for ſome ſixty, or ſeventy Miles round. And therefore, ſince it is agreed on all Hands, that Hail-Stones have frequently fallen, large enough to deſtroy never ſo great a Number of People, when naked and defenceleſs againſt their Blows, what need is there for our having Recourſe to any other Solution?

A Shower of Hail indeed, may be ſuppos'd to proceed from a more *natural* Cauſe: But, when the Event happen'd at the very Inſtant, wherein God promis'd to aſſiſt his People againſt their Enemies; when, though it might have annoy'd either Army, it fell only on *that*, which God had before determin'd to ruin; and fell ſo very heavily upon it, as to deſtroy *more than the Sword of the Conquerors had done*; ſuch an Event as this, I ſay, cannot but be look'd upon as a *miraculous* Interpoſition of Providence, how *fortuitous* ſoever the Concourſe of *ſecond Cauſes* may be. In working of Miracles, God uſually employs natural Cauſes and Productions. He does not create any *new Thing* for the Purpoſe; but makes uſe of what is already created, in a new and extraordinary Manner: And therefore, tho' the Shower of Hail, and probably the Wind too, which made it fall with ſuch Impetuoſity, were both of them *natural*; yet the ſending them at the very Nick of Time, and directing them to fall upon the Enemy only, in this there was manifeſtly the *Hand of God*, and ſomething ſupernatural.

From Joſh i. to the End.

The other Miracle is thus related in Holy Writ. *(c)* Joſhua *ſaid, in the Sight of all* Iſrael, *Sun, ſtand thou ſtill upon* Gibeon, *and thou Moon, in the Valley of* Ajalon: *And the Sun ſtood ſtill, and the Moon ſtayed, until the People had avenged themſelves of their Enemies. Is not this written in the Book of* Jaſher? *So the Sun ſtood ſtill in the midſt of Heaven, and haſted not to go down about a whole* Day: *And there was no Day like that, before or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the Voice of a Man; for the Lord fought for* Iſrael. Now for the better underſtanding of theſe Words, we muſt obſerve.

The latter Miracle, of what Kind.

1. That nothing is more common in Scripture, than to expreſs Things, not according to the ſtrict Rules of *Philoſophy*, but according to their *Appearances*, and the vulgar Apprehenſion concerning them. The Sun and Moon, for Inſtance, are call'd *(d) two great Lights*; but, however that Title may agree with the Sun, 'tis plain, that the Moon is but a *ſmall* Body, the leaſt that has yet been diſcover'd in the *Planetary Syſtem*, and that it has no *Light* at all, but what it borrows, and reflects from the Rays of the *Sun*; and yet, becauſe it is placed near us, it appears to us larger than other heavenly *Luminaries*, and from that Appearance, the holy Scriptures give it ſuch an Appellation. And, in

The Manner of Joſhua's *expreſſing himſelf, juſtify'd.*

(a) Exod. ix. 23, &c. (b) *Sauvin's* Diſſert. ſur la Defaite des cinq Rois. (c) Joſh. x. 12, &c.
(d) Gen. i. 16.

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in like Manner, becauſe the Sun ſeems to us to move, and the Earth to be at Reſt, the Scriptures ſpeak a great deal of the *Pillars*, and *Baſis*, and *Foundations* of the Earth, and of the Sun's *(e) rejoicing, like a Giant, to run its Race*, and of *(f) his ariſing, and going down, and haſtening to the Place, where it aroſe*, &c. Whereas it is certain, that, *(g)* if the Sun were made to revolve about the Earth, the * general Law of Nature would thereby be violated; the Harmony and Proportion of the heavenly Bodies deſtroy'd; and no ſmall Confuſion and Diſorder brought into the Frame of the Univerſe: But, on the contrary, if the Earth, turning upon its own *Axis* every Day, be made to go round the Sun in the Space of a Year, it will then perform its Circulation, according to the ſame *Law*, which the other Planets obſerve; and (without the leaſt Exception) there will be a moſt beautiful Order and Harmony of Motions, every where preſerv'd thro' the whole Frame of Nature. As therefore the Scriptures were deſign'd to teach us the Art of *holy Living*, and not to inſtruct us in the Rudiments of *natural Knowledge*, it can be deem'd no Diminution either to their Perfection, or divine Authority, that they generally ſpeak according to the common Appearance of Things, and not according to their Reality, or *philoſophic* Truth. The plain Matter of Fact is, that in the early Ages, both before, and long after the Days of *Joſhua*, the moſt learned *Aſtronomers* had no Notion of the Improvements, which our *modern* Profeſſors have ſince attain'd to. They never once dream'd of the Earth's *Rotation* upon its own *Axis*; but, according to common Appearance, were fully perſwaded, that the Sun and Moon had their reſpective Courſes. Upon this Suppoſition they form'd their *Schemes*, and thought themſelves able to anſwer every Phænomenon by them. And therefore, if God had prompted *Joſhua* to deſire the Prolongation of the Day, in a Manner more agreeable to our new *Aſtronomy*, or to record the Miracle in Terms more ſuitable to it; this would have been a plain Contrariety to all the Rules of Science then in Uſe. The People, who heard him utter the Words, *Earth reſt upon thy Axis*, would have thought him diſtracted, and thoſe who read his Account of what had happen'd, if related in ſuitable Expreſſions, would have decry'd it as falſe in Fact, or paſs'd it by with Contempt and Diſregard, as a wild Fancy or Blunder of his own.

From Joſh. i. to the End.

2. IN Relation to the Places, over which the two heavenly Bodies were to ſtand, the Sun *over Gibeon*, and the Moon *over the Valley of* Ajalon, we muſt obſerve, that (even upon the Suppoſition of the Sun's Motion) the *Jewiſh General* cannot be thought to ſpeak in a proper and *philoſophick* Senſe. For, ſince the Sun is almoſt a Million of Times bigger than the Earth, and ſome Millions of Miles diſtant from it, to juſtify the ſtrict Senſe of the Words, a Line, drawn from the *Center* of the Sun to that of the Earth, muſt exactly paſs by *Gibeon*, which we know it cannot do, becauſe no Part of the *Holy-Land* lies within the *Tropicks:* And therefore we muſt conclude, that *Joſhua* here ſpeaks according to the outward *Appearance* of

In relation to the Places where, and Time, when this Miracle *was wrought.*

(e) Pſal. xix. 5. *(f)* Eccleſ. i. 5. *(g)* *Keil*'s Aſtronomical Lectures.

* Beſides this general Argument of Mr *Kiel*'s, Mr *Whiſton* has one, which he accounts no leſs than a *Demonſtration:* "If the Earth, *ſays he*, have an *annual* Revolution about the Sun, it muſt affect the apparent Motion of all the other "Planets, and Comets; and, notwithſtanding the Regularity of their ſeveral Motions in their own *Orbits*, muſt render the regular Motions, as to us living upon the moving Earth, ſometimes *direct*, and that ſwiftly or ſlowly; "ſometimes *ſtationary*, and ſometimes *retrograde*, and that ſwiftly or ſlowly alſo; and all this, at ſuch certain Periods, "in ſuch certain Places, for ſuch certain Durations, and according to ſuch certain Circumſtances, (as *Geometry* and "*Arithmetick* will certainly determine) and not otherwiſe. Now, that this is the real Caſe in Fact, and that every "one of theſe Particulars are true in the *Aſtronomical* World, all, that are ſkilful in that Science do freely confeſs, "even thoſe, who do not think fit to declare openly for this *annual* Revolution of the Earth, which yet is the *natural* "and certain Conſequence of that Conceſſion." *Whiſton*'s Aſtron. Princ. of Relig. The Reader, that is deſirous to know more both of the *Annual* and *Diurnal* Motion of the Earth, may conſult Mr *Derham*'s Prelim. Diſc. to his Aſtro. Theol.

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Things, which makes the Senſe of his Words plain and intelligible.

Wherever we are, (if ſo be we are not hinder'd by Objects immediately ſurrounding us) we can caſt our Eye upon Part of the *Surface* of the Earth, and, at the ſame Time, take into our Proſpect ſome ſmall *Extent* of the *Firmament* of Heaven, which ſeems, as it were, to cover the other; and each *celeſtial* Body, which we perceive in this Extent above, appears to us to be directly over ſuch and ſuch Part of the Earth, as we *alternately* turn our Eyes to: And 'twas thus, that the *Sun*, when *Joſhua* ſpake, ſeem'd to him, and to thoſe that were with him, to *be over* Gibeon, *and the Moon to be over the Valley of* Ajalon. This Valley, in all Likelihood, took its Name from ſome adjacent Town; but then, as there are three *Ajalons* mention'd in Scripture, one *(h)* in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, another in *(i)* *Zebulon*, and another in *(k)* *Dan*, it is reaſonable to think, that the Place here ſpoken of, was in *Dan* the moſt remote Province from *Gibeon*; for we muſt ſuppoſe, that theſe two Places were at ſome conſiderable Diſtance; otherwiſe *Joſhua* could not ſee the Sun and Moon both appear at the ſame Time, as it is probable they were both in his Eye, when he utter'd theſe Words.

3. In Relation to the Time when this Miracle began, and how long it laſted, the Scripture's Expreſſion is, that the *Sun ſtood ſtill in the midſt of Heaven, and haſted not to go down about a whole Day*: Which Words can import no leſs, than that the Sun ſtood ſtill in the *Meridian*, or much about Noon, and that in this Poſition it continu'd for the Space of a *civil* or *artificial* Day, *i. e.* for twelve Hours. But *(l)* *Maimonides* is of Opinion, (and in this he is follow'd *(m)* by ſome Chriſtian Writers) that there was no ſuch Ceſſation of the Sun and Moon's Motion, but that the whole Purport of the Miracle was this: —— "That God, at *Joſhua*'s "Requeſt, granted him and his Soldiers "ſuch a Degree of Spirits, Activity, and "Diſpatch, as enabled them to gain a "compleat Victory, and do as much "Execution in one Day, as might other-"wiſe have taken up two:" But this is a Conſtruction ſo repugnant to the genuine Senſe of the Words, as to need no formal Confutation. From Joſh. i. to the End.

There is ſomething more, however, to be ſaid to the Notion of other learned Men, who, with Regard to the *Time*, when *Joſhua* might ſend up his Requeſt, and the Miracle begin, think it more probable, that he ſhould pray for a longer Day, when he perceiv'd the Sun juſt going to leave him, than when it was in its Height. But *Joſhua*, no doubt, had Reaſons for what he did: He was an old experienc'd *General*, eager for a compleat Victory, and able to compute what Time it would take to atchieve it; ſo that his Fear of loſing any Part of the preſent Advantage, might make him pray that the Day might be thus prolong'd, until he had obtain'd the *whole*. If the Sun, in its Declenſion, had ſtopp'd its Courſe, it might have anſwer'd his Purpoſe perhaps; but then it had given a juſter Handle to the Suggeſtions of thoſe, who would deny the whole Merit of the Miracle. For, if the Retardation of the Sun had not happen'd until it was going to ſet, *(n)* *Spinoſa* might, with a much better Grace, have attributed the extraordinary Length of this Day to the *Refraction* of its Rays from the Clouds, which at that Time were loaded with Hail; or *(o)* *Peirerius*, to ſome *Aurora Borealis*, or *Parelium*, which, after the Setting of the Sun, might appear about the Territories of *Gibeon*, and ſo be miſtaken for the Sun's ſtanding ſtill: But now, by fixing it in its *meridian* Point, all theſe Cavils are effectually ſilenc'd; and *(p)* God, no doubt, who heard him ſo readily, inſpir'd the *Hebrew*

General

(h) 1 Chron. vi. 69. *(i)* Judg. xii. 12. *(k)* Joſh. xix. 42. *(l)* More Nevoch. Part II. Chap. 39. *(m)* *Grotius* and *Maſius* in Locum. *(n)* Tract. Theolog. Politic. c. 2. *(o)* Præadam. Lib. iv. c. 6. *(p)* *Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur le Commandment, &c.

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General with that Wiſh or Prayer, which otherwiſe perhaps would never have come into his Head.

The Book of Jaſhar, *what.*

4. IN Relation to the Book of *Jaſhar*, (or of *juſt* and *upright* Men) which *Joſhua* quotes, as a Voucher of the Truth of this Miracle, the Opinions of learned Men are much divided. *(q)* Some think, that it was the Book of *Geneſis*, which is here ſo called, becauſe it treats of the Lives of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, three of the moſt righteous Men, that the World then knew. The Targum of *Jonathan* calls it *the Book of the Law*, as containing, not only the chief *Precepts*, which God gave his People, but ſeveral *Promiſes* likewiſe of the Wonders, which he intended to work for them. *(r) Joſephus*, and ſome Interpreters after him, will have it to be certain *Annals* of the Lives, and particular Adventures of ſome *Jewiſh Worthies*, and of other Things remarkable, that happen'd to that Nation; tho' others again ſuppoſe, that this was only a *Collection* of ſome *Verſes*, which the *Iſraelites* thought themſelves concern'd to learn by Heart, the better to remember the Miracles which God had been pleas'd to vouchſafe them. But whatever the Subject of this Book was, or † whether it was compos'd in *Proſe* or *Verſe*, 'tis a groundleſs Conjecture to ſay, *(s)* that it was wrote in a figurative and hyperbolical Style, or that the *Quotation*, which *Joſhua* takes from it, is ſo to be underſtood. The Deſign of the Quotation is only to confirm what *Joſhua* had ſaid concerning the Retardation of the Sun; and therefore, if the Book of *Joſhua* affirms, that the Sun did ſtand ſtill, that of *Jaſhar* (in what Stile ſo ever it was written) muſt neceſſarily be ſuppos'd to do the ſame; otherwiſe it would have been to no Purpoſe to have cited it. From Joſh. i. to the End.

And the whole Narrative of this Miracle literal.

IT cannot be deny'd indeed, but that, upon ſome Occaſions, the ſacred *Penmen* do uſe Figures, and *poetical* Expreſſions; but then the Senſe and Chain of the Diſcourſe do eaſily diſcover it, when they do ſo. Whenever they intend to expreſs themſelves in a figurative Manner, there is uſually ſomething going before, which prepares the Reader for it; and beſides that *figurative* Expreſſions cannot be long continu'd, there is always ſomething apparently in them, that can by no means be reduc'd to a *literal* Senſe. But now, in the Scripture Account of this Tranſaction, where do we perceive any Thing like this? *(t) Joſhua*, ſeeing the Enemy put to the Rout, begs of God to give him a compleat Victory, and, at the ſame Time, out of the Zeal and Fervour of his Mind, commands the Sun and Moon not to advance any farther until he had effected his Deſire. The ſacred Hiſtorian tells us, that, at his Command, theſe heavenly *Luminaries* actually did ſtand

(q) *J. Jarch.* in Joſh. x. 13. (r) Antiq. lib. x. c. 17.

† M. *Le Clerc* has taken the Pains to verſify the two Places, where Mention is made of the *Sun's ſtanding ſtill*, by the Tranſpoſition of ſome Words, in order to make it appear at leaſt probable, that the Author of the Book of *Joſhua*, in quoting them out of that of *Jaſhar*, had only reduc'd them to *hiſtorial* Proſe by the contrary Tranſpoſition. But, beſides the Difficulty of telling us, what Kind of Verſes theſe are, (ſince the Art of *ſcanning Hebrew* Poeſy has been loſt as long as St *Jerom*'s Days) if he ſuppoſes them to be only Rhymes and Cadences, it is no uncommon Thing, we know, to meet with ſeveral Paſſages, both in the *Scriptural*, and other *Proſe* Writers, which, with a ſmall Variation of the Text, are capable of this harmonious Turn, and yet were originally never ſo intended. It is to be obſerv'd however, that tho' the Words, *ſo the Sun ſtood ſtill in the midſt of Heaven, and haſtened not to go down about a whole Day*, are probably cited from ſome antient Record, yet the preceding ones, *and the Sun ſtood ſtill, and the Moon ſtayed, until the People had avenged themſelves upon their Enemies*, (Joſh. x. 13.) are the Author's own, wherein he talks, not in the Loftineſs of a *Poet*, but in the Plainneſs and Simplicity of an *Hiſtorian:* And therefore it is, at leaſt, a bold Aſſumption, to ſay, that a Writer, who barely appeals to another for the Truth of a ſingle Inſtance, has taken the *whole* from him. The moſt that can be fairly concluded from ſuch an Appeal, is, that the Fact is equally affirm'd by both, either in the ſame or equivalent Terms; whereas, had the Terms of the *Sun's ſtanding ſtill in the midſt of Heaven* been intended to mean no more, than that there remain'd ſo much Light, after its Setting, occaſion'd by ſome unuſual *Refraction*, as made the whole Army think it was ſtill above the *Horizon*, no honeſt Man (for Fear of impoſing on his Reader) would have cited them, without modifying their Senſe, or giving them an Explanation. *Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur la Defaite des cinq Roys; and Univerſ. lib. i. c. 7.

(s) *Grotius* and *Le Clerc* in Locum. (t) *Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur le Commandment, &c.

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ſtand ſtill; and, to evince the Credibility of a Thing ſo marvellous, having produc'd the Teſtimony of another Author, that makes mention of the ſame Event, he thereupon concludes, that *(u) there was no Day like that, before it or after it, that God hearkened to the Voice of a Man.* Here, we ſee, are all the Tokens imaginable of a ſimple, literal, and hiſtorical Narration: And the Reader muſt therefore be ſtrangely prejudic'd againſt the Belief of all Miracles whatever, who can poſſibly diſtort ſuch plain and uniform Expreſſions into any figurative or metaphorical Senſe, in order to evade the Force of this.

An Objection.

"But, if there really was ſuch a "Miracle wrought, 'tis ſomewhat ſtrange, "that the Author to the *Hebrews*, when "he certainly makes mention of Things "of leſs Moment, ſhould entirely forget "this, or that we ſhould have no Memo"rial of it recorded by any *profane* Wri"ter. God is not ſo prodigal of his Mi"racles, one would think, as to reverſe "the whole Order of Nature, and ſtop "the Sun in its regular Courſe, merely "that a Victory might be obtain'd in one "Day, which, every whit as well, might "have been gain'd in two; tho' it can"not be deny'd, but that, if it was ſo, "his *hearkening to the Voice of* Joſhua, "gave him a Pre-eminence far above "*Moſes*, (foraſmuch as all his Miracles were "nothing in Compariſon of this) even "tho' the Scriptures ſay expreſſly; that "*(x) there roſe not a Prophet, in all* Iſ"rael, *like unto* Moſes, *in all Signs and* "*Wonders, which the Lord ſent him to* "*do in the Land of* Egypt, *and in the* "*Wilderneſs.*"

Anſwer'd by ſhewing the Reaſons why St Paul *omitted it.*

The Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, in *(y)* the Chapter now under Debate, meant no more, than to give his Reader ſome notable Inſtances of the wonderful Power of Faith. To have been too curious in the Choice of theſe Inſtances, eſpecially when he wrote to Perſons of the ſame Nation, and who were as well acquainted with theſe Things as himſelf, would have ſavour'd too much of Art and *human* Wiſdom, which *inſpir'd* Authors always profeſſedly avoid; and to have been too prolix in the Commemoration of them, would have ſpoil'd the Form of his *Epiſtle*, by ſwelling that Part of it beyond its due Proportion. From Joſh. i. to the End.

The Apoſtle himſelf ſeems to be ſenſible of this; and therefore we find him cutting himſelf ſhort, omitting ſome, and reckoning up ſeveral other Inſtances in the Groſs; and *(z) what ſhall I more ſay? for the Time would fail me, to tell of* Gideon, *and of* Barak, *and of* Sampſon, *and of* Jephtha; *of* David *alſo, and* Samuel, *and all the Prophets.* You ſee, that, in the Catalogue of his *Worthies*, he obſerves no great Method in enumerating them, nor does he ſo much as mention *Joſhua*, tho' his Character be vaſtly ſuperior to that of *Gideon*, and others, that he takes Notice of; and therefore, if his omitting this Particular of the *Sun's ſtanding ſtill* may be deem'd a ſufficient Argument againſt its *Reality*; by Parity of Reaſon, all the other miraculous Tranſactions, which he has thought proper not to mention, ſuch as the Plagues of *Egypt*, the Wonders in the Wilderneſs, the Paſſage of *Jordan*, and ſeveral others of the like Nature, muſt be reputed deſtitute of Truth, how frequently ſoever they may be recorded in other Parts of Holy Writ.

Why Heathen *Authors.*

And in like Manner, tho' we find no Mention made of this wonderful Event in *Heathen* Writers, yet, this is no valid Objection againſt it, becauſe it happen'd many Ages before there was any *Hiſtorians* or *Chronologers*, that we know of, extant to record it. Or if we think, that a Fact, ſo very remarkable, could have hardly eſcap'd a *general Obſervation*, why may we not ſuppoſe, that the publick *Archives*, or Monuments, wherein it was recorded, in the long and obſcure Time that interven'd before any of our preſent Hiſtorians

(u) Joſh. x. 14. (x) Deut. xxxiv. 10, 11. (y) Chap. xi. (z) Ver. 32.

A.M. 2553, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1451, &c.

Hiſtorians aroſe, have been loſt; and that nothing has been tranſmitted to us, (except what we have in *Sacred Writ*) but an uncertain *Tradition*, clouded with Fable and poetical Fictions?

IT can hardly be thought indeed, but that the Humour, which the *Poets* had, * of imputing to *Magick* the Power of ſtopping the Stars in their Courſes, and what they relate of their *Heroes* and *Demi-Gods* being able to lengthen Days or Nights, as it beſt ſerv'd their *military* or *amorous* Purpoſes, proceeded from ſomething: And to what can we aſcribe it more properly, than to a glimmering Knowledge, which they might from Tradition have of this miraculous Event? But however this be, 'tis certain, that the Argument, drawn from the Silence of *heathen* Authors, can be of no Validity againſt the Truth of this Miracle, ſince it did not happen in any Age, when the earlieſt of them liv'd, and might therefore be what they knew nothing of; ſince all their Works have not deſcended to us, and in what is loſt, they perhaps might have related it, as in what is extant, we are ſure they ſay nothing to contradict it.

(a) IT muſt be reckon'd a Point of *Juſtice* then, and a Kind of *Right* belonging to all Nations, to be determin'd, in what concerns the Hiſtory of any Country, by the Hiſtory of thoſe People, who are preſum'd to be better acquainted with their own Affairs, than any Strangers can: And therefore we cannot, without apparent Prejudice, deny this Privilege to the *Hebrew* Writers, even tho' we found ſome *heathen* Teſtimonies not entirely according with them. But when nothing of this is pretended; on the contrary, when (as far as theſe dark Times would permit) there is a Concurrence and Harmony between them, there can be no Shadow of Reaſon for calling in Queſtion their Veracity, unleſs the Things which they relate be either *impoſſible* or *contradictory*, which, in the Caſe before us, can never be affirm'd; becauſe it is ſure and ſelf-evident, that the Author of Nature, who gave Being and Motion to the Sun and Stars, may ſtop that Motion, and make them ſtand ſtill, when, and as long as he pleaſes; eſpecially when their Reſt will contribute to his Glory (as it certainly did in this Inſtance) as much as their continu'd Motion does. From Joſh. i. to the End.

GOD indeed never works any Miracle but upon a juſt and proper Occaſion; but then, we ought to remember, that this Battle, againſt the *confederate* Kings, was fought not *offenſively*, but *defenſively* on the Side of *Iſrael*, in order to ſave a People, whom they had ſolemnly taken under their Protection. The *Gibeonites*, as is generally ſuppos'd, were a *Commonwealth*, for which Reaſon they might not enter into a League with the five Kings; and, as a *free* People, they had a Right, no doubt, to take all proper Meaſures for their Safety. *Joſhua* therefore could not but look upon the Confederacy form'd againſt them, as cruel and unjuſt, and himſelf oblig'd in Honour not to refuſe the Oppreſs'd the Succours, they requeſted of him, upon any Pretence whatever; ſince God's Honour was likewiſe concern'd in the Preſervation of a People, who had enter'd into an Alliance with his own *Inheritance*, and had their Alliance ratify'd by the Mouth of his *High-Prieſt*, and with the Sanction of his moſt bleſſed Name. Upon theſe Conſiderations, *Joſhua* loſes no Time, but marches all the Night to their Aſſiſtance; and, on the next Day, God is pleas'd to reward his Faithfulneſs and Zeal with a moſt miraculous Victory, whereby he not only reſcu'd his Allies, but made all the Land of *Canaan* ſenſible likewiſe, that a greater and more powerful God was on *Iſrael*'s Side, than any whom they worſhipp'd, *(b)* by ſtopping the Sun *Reaſons for God's working this Miracle.*

* Ceſſavêre Vices Rerum, dilataque longâ
Hæſit Nocte Dies: Legi non paruit Æther,
Torpuit & Præceps, audito *Carmine*, Mundus. *Lucan*'s Pharſ. lib. vi.

(a) Calmet's Diſſert. ſur le Commandment, &c. *(b) Patrick*'s Comm. in Locum.

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and Moon (which were two of the principal Deities, whom thoſe Idolatrous People ador'd) in the Midſt of their Courſe.

God might, no doubt, in the Compaſs of two Days, have enabled the *Iſraelites* to have gain'd a compleat Conqueſt over their Enemies, without the *Expence of a Miracle* (as theſe Men call it). But then, had this been obtain'd by the Dint of the Sword only, it would have been imputed to their ſuperior Valour and Strength, and deem'd no more, than the common Fate of War; or had there nothing more remarkable happen'd in it, than a Shower of large Hail-Stones, this might have been thought owing to Chance or natural Cauſes, or at moſt, been only known in that Neighbourhood: Whereas, the ſtopping of the two great *Luminaries*, in the Height of their *Career*, (which could not but be univerſally ſeen and felt) was enough to convince theſe poor deluded People, that the Gods, whom they truſted in, were ſubject to the God of *Iſrael*, and, at the ſame Time, deter the *Iſraelites* from falling into the like Idolatry, from *(c) kiſſing their Hand* (as *Job* expreſſes that Form of Worſhip) *when they beheld the Sun as it ſhined, or the Moon walking in its Brightneſs:* To convince them I ſay, that *(d) the Gods of the Heathens were but Idols*, and that *it is the Lord who made*, and who ruleth in *the Heavens*.

Joſhua, *notwithſtanding this Miracle, not ſuperior to* Moſes.

It cannot be queſtion'd, but that the Fame of this Miracle rais'd *Joſhua*'s Reputation to an high Degree, nor *(e)* can we ſee any Inconvenience in admitting, that this was a more remarkable Miracle, than any, which *Moſes* ever did; becauſe, it does not therefore follow, that *Joſhua*, in other Reſpects, was a Perſon of greater Eminence, than *Moſes*. Our bleſſed Saviour tells his *Diſciples*, *(f) Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, he that believeth on me, the Works, that I do, ſhall he do alſo, and greater Works than theſe ſhall he do; becauſe I go unto my Father:* And yet he gives us to underſtand, in another Place, that *(g) the Diſciple is not above his Maſter, nor the Servant above his Lord.* From Joſh. i. to the End.

ELISHA was the Servant and Attendant on the Prophet *Elijah*, and yet it is certain, that, according to our Eſtimate, he did more and greater Miracles, than his Maſter did; for even *(h) after his Death his Body propheſied*; (as the Son of *Sirach* expreſſes it) *he did Wonders in his Life, and at his Death were his Works marvellous.* And therefore we need not account it a ſtrange Thing, that we find *Joſhua* here doing a Miracle, which, in our Opinion, ſurpaſſes all that ever *Moſes* did: Becauſe God's making uſe of the Miniſtry of one Man, rather than another, in his ſurpaſſing Works of Wonder, is no certain Proof of the Man's ſuperior Merit; ſince, in this, as well as any other Diſpenſation, he is at perfect Liberty *(i) to chuſe* (if he pleaſes) *the weak Things of the World, to confound the Things that are mighty; yea, and baſe Things, and Things that are not, to bring to nought Things that are, that no Fleſh ſhould glory in his Preſence.*

But after all, we talk of *greater* and *leſs* Miracles, when, in Reality, there are no ſuch Degrees of Compariſon between them. For what is it that makes us account one Work of this Kind greater than another? If it be, becauſe we conceive more Difficulty in the Doing it; this, with Regard to God (the ſole Author of all Miracles) is a great Miſtake, foraſmuch as all Things are equally eaſy to his Almighty Power. The Motion, and other Properties of every created Being, were at firſt impreſs'd by him; *(k) He ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt*; and, with the ſame Facility, he can retard, or ſuſpend their Operations, for they have no Power of reſiſting the very firſt Beck of his Will. Since every Thing therefore, that is contrary to the ordinary Courſe of Nature, requires the

(c) Job xxxi. 26. *(d)* Pſal. xcvi. 5. *(e)* *Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur le Commandment, &c. *(f)* John xiv. 12. *(g)* Matth. x. 24. *(h)* Eccluſ. xlviii. 13, 14. *(i)* 1 Cor. i. 27, &c. *(k)* Pſal. xxxiii. 9.

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the Interpoſition of an Almighty Power, and whatever is not impoſſible in itſelf, is equally poſſible to God; with him there can be no Difference between paſſing the *Jordan*, and paſſing the *Red-Sea*, between drawing Water out of the *ſtony Rock*, and arreſting the Sun in the Firmament of Heaven; for *(l) whatever he pleaſed, that did he, in Heaven, and in the Earth, in the Sea, and in all deep Places.* From Joſh. i. to the End.

(l) Pſal. cxxxv. 6.

CHAP. II.

From the Death of JOSHUA *to the Death of* SAMPSON.

The HISTORY.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

After the Death of Joſhua, *ſeveral Tribes conquer ſeveral Parts of* Canaan.

AFTER the Death of *Joſhua*, * no particular Perſon, that we read of, ſucceeded him in the Government; and therefore the moſt probable Opinion is, that every Tribe was govern'd by their reſpective *Heads*, or *Elders*, (which Form of Government ſubſiſted about *thirty* Years) and that, in their Wars with the *Canaanites*, they made them their Commanders. For, ſeveral of the *Canaanitiſh* Kings remaining ſtill unconquer'd, the *Iſraelites* unanimouſly reſolv'd to ſet about their Reduction; and accordingly repair'd to the *Oracle* at *Shiloh*, to aſk Directions of God, which Tribe ſhould begin the War. God's Orders were, that the Tribe of *Judah* ſhould begin; and therefore they, taking to their Aſſiſtance the Tribe of *Simeon*, firſt ſet upon the cruel † King of *Bezek*; ſack'd the Town, kill'd ten Thouſand of its Inhabitants, and, as he was endeavouring to make his Eſcape, ſeiz'd him, and cut † off his *Thumbs* and *Great-Toes*, in the like Manner, as he had done to no leſs than *ſeventy* little Kings or Princes, whom he compell'd to gather their Meat, like Dogs, under his Table: So that the Similitude of his Puniſhment made the Tyrant reflect upon his own Cruelty, and acknowledge the Juſtice of God in what he had brought upon him. From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

AFTER the Conqueſt of *Bezek*, the two united Tribes † inveſted *Jeruſalem*, and, having taken it, put the Inhabitants to

* The *Samaritan Chronicle* tells us indeed, that, in the laſt Aſſembly which *Joſhua* held, he nominated twelve *Chiefs*, of every Tribe one, and put it to the *Lot*, who ſhould ſucceed him in the Government; that the Lot fell upon his Nephew *Abel*, whom he accordingly crown'd, and inveſted with other Enſigns of Honour, *&c.* But this is thought to be no more than a *fabulous* Account invented to fill up this void Space of Time. *Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur *Heglon*, Roi des *Moabites* tué, *&c.*

† There is another Place in Scripture, *viz.* 1 Sam. xi. 8. where *Bezek* is mention'd; and ſince *Euſebius* and *Jerom* tell us, that there were, in their Days, two Towns, about ſeventeen Miles from *Shechem*, of the ſame Name, and not far diſtant from each other, we ſee nothing of Moment to hinder them from being both but one City in former Times. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

† The Reaſon of their mutilating him in this Manner, was, to make him uncapable of War any more, being unable to *handle Arms*, by Reaſon of the Loſs of his *Thumbs*, or to *run ſwiftly*, (which was a notable Quality in a Warrior in thoſe Days) by the Loſs of his *Great-Toes*. *Patrick*'s Com. in Locum.

† We do not read, that *Jeruſalem* was ever taken by *Joſhua*, tho' it ſeems highly probable, that, when he took the King of *Jeruſalem*, he did to it, as he did to the reſt of the Cities belonging to thoſe Kings, *Joſh.* x. 3, 23. But when he was gone to conquer other Parts of the Country, it is likely that the old Inhabitants return'd again, and took

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1443, &c.

to the Sword, and ſet the Place on Fire. They thence march'd to *Hebron*; and, having made themſelves Maſters of it, went to attack *Debir*, which was Part of *Caleb*'s Allotment, though the *Canaanites* at that Time had Poſſeſſion of it. *Caleb*, † who, in all Probability, was *General* in theſe Wars, being reſolv'd to ſtorm the Place, made Proclamation in the Camp, that whoever ſhould attack, and carry it, ſhould have his Daughter *Achſah* as a Reward of his Valour; which his gallant Nephew *Othniel*, Son to his younger Brother *Kenaz*, atchiev'd, and ſo, not only obtain'd the beauteous Damſel for his Wife, but with her a large Eſtate likewiſe in a well-water'd Country, which, at her Requeſt, her Father very generouſly beſtow'd on him.

Thus the Tribe of *Simeon* aſſiſted that of *Judah*, to ſubdue the *mountainous* Parts about *Jeruſalem*, and the *ſouthern* Parts adjoining to the Wilderneſs of *Paran*; and, when this was done, the Tribe of *Judah*, in like Manner, aſſiſted the *Simeonites* to take *Gaza*, *Aſhkelon*, and *Zephah*, which was then call'd *Hormah*; ſo that theſe Places, in After-Ages, came into their Poſſeſſion. Encourag'd by theſe Succeſſes the Family of *Joſeph* undertook the Conqueſt of *Bethel*; and, to this Purpoſe, ſent out Spies, to take a Survey of the Town, and to gain what Intelligence they could. They perceiving a Man coming out of it, immediately ſeiz'd him, but promis'd to ſpare his Life, upon Condition that he would give them the beſt Information he could, in what Way the Town was approachable. The Man did ſo; and by his Information they ſucceeded ſo well, that, ſending for their Forces, they enter'd the Place, and put all the Inhabitants to the Sword, except the Man who had given them Intelligence, and his Family.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

The other Tribes had equally good Succeſs in gaining the Poſſeſſion of the Lands that were allotted them; only the Tribe of *Dan* was compell'd to quit the Plains for fear of the *Amorites*, and to retire into the mountainous Parts of the Country, where they were pent up for ſome Time, until the Family of *Joſeph* came to their Aſſiſtance; and, having reſtrain'd the Inſolence of their Enemies, reduc'd them to a narrower Tract of Land, than what they had at firſt.

They keep Company with the Natives, fall into Idolatry, and are oppreſs'd.

One great Default however in thoſe, that were ſucceſsful againſt the *Canaanites*, was, that they did not make a right Uſe of their Victories, but, either through a miſplac'd Lenity, or Covetouſneſs, inſtead of deſtroying them, (as they were commanded) ſuffer'd them to live promiſcuouſly among them, and contented themſelves with making them *tributary*; which ſo far incens'd God, that he ſent an † *Angel*

Poſſeſſion of it, for the Land was not then divided among the *Iſraelites*. But as *Joſhua*, a little before his Death, divided the Land, and this City fell, in Part, to the Share of the Tribe of *Judah*, they diſpoſſeſs'd the *Jebuſites*, that dwelt there, of all but the ſtrong Fortreſs on the Top of Mount *Sion*, which held out till the Days of *David*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Who was their *General* on this Occaſion, is not expreſsly mention'd either in Scripture, *Joſephus*, or any other antient Hiſtorian; and yet, it is hardly to be queſtion'd, but that *Caleb* was the Perſon. He was of the Tribe of *Judah*, older than any other by twenty Years; and yet, like *Moſes*, he continu'd in his full Strength and Vigour. He and *Joſhua* were the only two Spies, who, having ſearch'd out the Land, gave a true Report of it; and therefore, as *Joſhua* was the firſt *General*, he had the greateſt Right to ſucceed him, and this might be the Reaſon why *Joſhua*, at his Death, nam'd no other. He, and *Joſhua* were the two only Perſons, to whom the *Iſraelites* gave Inheritances for their ſignal Services; and, as his Inheritance lay unconquer'd in this Tribe, he had the greateſt Reaſon to be active in reducing it. His Name alone is mention'd in all theſe Wars; and as his Son-in-law, *Othniel*, was the firſt Deliverer of the *Iſraelites* from their Oppreſſions, he ſeems to have ſucceeded *Caleb* in this Dignity, as his neareſt and moſt valiant Relation. *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 3.

† The *Jews* are generally of Opinion, that, by this Angel, we are to underſtand a *Prophet*, who was ſent by God as a *Meſſenger*, which the Word very often imports; and this Meſſenger they commonly take to have been *Phineas*, who was employ'd upon this Errand. We can ſee no Reaſon however for their departing from the uſual Signification of the Word, eſpecially when there is no Abſurdity in it, and the Senſe of the Context ſeems to require our retaining it. Nay, there is Reaſon to ſay, that the Perſon, who here reproves the *Iſraelites*, was ſomething more than a *created* Angel; for who but God can ſpeak in this Stile, *I made you to* go out of *Egypt?* No Prophet, nor any created Angel durſt have been ſo bold: And therefore, the Opinion of moſt *Chriſtian* Interpreters is, that it was the *Son of God*,

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Angel from *Gilgal*, to expoſtulate the Matter with them; to remind them of the Favours, which he had vouchſaf'd them, in delivering them out of *Egypt*, and bringing them into that happy Land, of his punctual Performance of all the Promiſes he had made them, and of their vile Ingratitude in rejecting his Precepts, for which he had very juſtly withdrawn his Protection from them.

THIS Reproof made the People, for the preſent, a little ſenſible of their Tranſgreſſion, ſo that they fell into a general *Lamentation*; and, deploring the Wretchedneſs of their Condition, offer'd Sacrifices to God, in order to appeaſe his Wrath. But no ſooner was this Fit of Humiliation over, but, continuing ſtill their Correſpondence with the *Canaanites*, indulging themſelves in their looſe Converſation, and making Intermarriages with them, they fell into Idolatry, and worſhipp'd *Baal* and *Aſhteroth*, and other Idols of the Heathens, which ſo provok'd the Lord, that he left them to themſelves; and they (without his Protection) made ſo weak a Defence, that they were often taken, and enſlav'd by their Enemies.

THE firſt Oppreſſor, that the *Iſraelites* had, was nam'd *Chuſan-Riſhathaim*. He was King of *Meſopotamia*, and, when he invaded the Territories of *Iſrael*, he made an eaſy Conqueſt, and impos'd a *Tribute* on them, which laſted for eight Years; but, at the Expiration of that Time, God rais'd up *Othniel*, *Caleb*'s Son-in-Law (who was the firſt of thoſe whom the Scripture calls *Judges*) and inſpir'd him with Courage and Reſolution to take up Arms againſt the King of *Meſopotamia*, whom he ſoon defeated, and ſettled the *Iſraelites* in a State of Peace and Tranquillity, which laſted for forty Years. But during this Space of Time, the People fell into a general Apoſtacy, and Corruption of Manners, whereof the † two following Stories are ſad and remarkable Inſtances.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

THE Tribe of *Dan* (as we ſaid before) being pent up in the mountainous Parts, found their Territories much too narrow for them; and therefore they ſent out of their Body five Spies to ſurvey the Country, and bring them in Intelligence, in what Part of the Regions round about they might moſt likely extend their Bounds. The Spies, in their Journey, came to the Houſe of *Micah* of Mount *Ephraim*, whoſe Mother, thinking it too much Trouble to go to *Shiloh* to Worſhip, and offer Sacrifices there, had made an *Idol*, and plac'd it in a private Chapel of her Son's building: For her Son had an † *Ephod*, and *Teraphim*, and, for ſome Time, had conſecrated

The ſad Impiety and Wickedneſs of theſe Times, ſhewn in two Inſtances.

who is frequently in Scripture call'd the *Angel of the Covenant*. And fit it was for him to appear now, as coming from *Gilgal*, to put them in mind of his illuſtrious Appearance near that Place once before, of the Aſſurance he then gave them of his Preſence with them in the Conqueſt of the Land, and of the ſolemn *Covenant*, he made with them, by renewing of *Circumciſion*. The Angel's *coming up from Gilgal* is therefore mention'd, as a very pertinent Circumſtance, to upbraid the *Iſraelites* with their baſe Ingratitude to God, and with their Sloth in not endeavouring to expel the *Canaanites*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Theſe two Stories are related in the xvii, xviii, and xixth Chapters of *Judges*, and being ſo plac'd, they may ſeem to belong to the latter Part of this Period; whereas, in the Judgment of moſt learned Men, they were tranſacted much about this Time. 'Tis plain from the Text, (Chap. xvii. 6.) that theſe Things happen'd *when there was no King* (i. e. no *Ruler*, for, properly ſpeaking, there had hitherto been no King) *in* Iſrael, *but every Man did what was right in his own Eyes*; and the Reaſon why *Samuel*, or whoever was the Author of this Book, places them here, is, becauſe he was not willing to break the Thread of his Hiſtory by intermixing theſe Matters with it, but reſerv'd them to be related apart by themſelves. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† That the Divine Service might be perform'd with a greater Reſemblance of what was done at the Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, he made *prieſtly Ornaments*; for ſo ſome learned Men take the *Ephod* to comprehend, not only the Breaſt-plate adjoining to it, but all the reſt of the Veſtments us'd by the High-Prieſt. His Intention was to ſet up an Oracle in his own Houſe, in Imitation of the Sanctuary of *Moſes*; and therefore, to make the Conformity the greater, 'tis ſuppos'd that he erected a Kind of *Ark*, whereon he plac'd his two *Teraphims*, to anſwer the two *Cherubims* in the Tabernacle, as he caus'd the Prieſt who officiated for him to wear an *Ephod*, in the Manner that the High Prieſt did, when he conſulted God. Mr *Selden* (in his Syntagma 1. de Diis Syris, Cap. 2) well obſerves, that the Worſhip of the true God, and of Idols, was here blended together. The *Ephod* and the *Levite*, which *Micah* afterwards provided, were intended, no doubt, for the Service of the true God, but the graven *Image* and *Teraphim*, by which the Children

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ſecrated one of his own Sons to be his Prieſts; until a *Levite*, who had dwelt ſome Time at *Bethlehem-Judah*, travelling from thence to ſeek a better Settlement, happen'd to call at *Micah*'s Houſe, and by him was hir'd to execute that Office; whereupon, the Man was fond enough to believe, that God would proſper him not a little, now that he had got a *Levite* to be his Prieſt.

The Idolatry of the Danites.

It ſo happen'd, that ſome of theſe Spies being acquainted with this *Levite*, and, after ſome Diſcourſe, underſtanding in what Capacity he ſerv'd *Micah*, deſir'd of him to aſk Counſel of God, what Succeſs they might poſſibly promiſe themſelves in the Enterprize they were going upon, and, with the Encouragement which he gave them, they proceeded on their Search, until they came to *Laiſh*; where, obſerving a pleaſant and fruitful Country, and the People living in a ſecure and negligent Manner, without any Rule or Diſcipline among them, they return'd to their Brethren, and gave them an Account, how fruitful the Country was, and how eaſily, in their Opinion, the Place might be taken by Surprize.

Upon this, the *Danites* drew out a Party of ſix hundred Men, and ſent them to take Poſſeſſion of the City *Laiſh*: But, in their Way through Mount *Ephraim*, they call'd at *Micah*'s Houſe, and, in his Abſence, ſeiz'd the *Levite*, the *Ephod*, the *Teraphim*, and other Images, that *Micah* had made; and, as the *Levite* was remonſtrating againſt what they had done, they ſoon pacify'd him, by repreſenting the Advantage of being a Prieſt to a whole *Tribe* rather than any one Family; and, with the Hopes of that, he went very willingly along with them.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

MICAH returning Home, and underſtanding that his Prieſt and his Gods were gone, muſters up his Friends, and purſues the *Danites*; but, when he came up with ſome of the hindmoſt of them, and was making his Complaint againſt the Injury they had done, they wiſh'd him to be gone; for that, if he perſiſted to irritate the reſt of the Party, it would certainly coſt him and his Friends their Lives: And ſo continuing their March, on the third Day they came to *Laiſh*, where finding it unguarded they burnt the City, deſtroy'd the Inhabitants, and took Poſſeſſion of the Country; but, in a ſhort Time after, they rebuilt the City, which, after the Name of their Father was call'd *Dan*, and here ſetting up the Images, which they had ſtolen from *Micah*, they made this ſame *Levite* (whoſe Name was *Jonathan*) their Prieſt: And in this State of *idolatrous* Worſhip they continu'd for about three hundred Years, even unto the Time † that the Ark of God was taken Captive by the

Children of *Dan* deſir'd the *Levite* to enquire of God, belong'd unto *Dæmons*. They neither truſted to the Ephod alone, which related to God, nor to their Teraphim alone, which was their own Invention, but thought it neceſſary to join both together in divine Worſhip: And thus began Idolatry in *Iſrael* by the Superſtition of an old Woman, who put this in her Son's Head. This Woman many of the *Jews* ſuppoſe to be the ſame with *Dalilah*, who having got ſo much Money of every one of the Lords of the *Philiſtines*, thought it expedient to employ ſome of it in expreſſing her Devotion. But this is an idle Conceit, that has no other Foundation, than *Dalilah*'s being mention'd in the foregoing Chapter; whereas *Micah* was ſome hundred Years prior to her. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Jurieu*'s Hiſt. des Dogmes & Cult. Par. III.

† The Words of the Text are:——*And the Children of* Dan *ſet up the graven Image, and* Jonathan *and his Sons were Prieſts to the Tribe of* Dan, *until the Day of the Captivity of the Land*, Judg. xviii. 30. But then the Queſtion is, what we are to underſtand by *the Captivity of the Land*? Now there are two Times mention'd in Scripture, when the Children of *Iſrael* were carry'd away Captive by *Tiglath-Pileſer*, when he *took* Hazor, *and* Gilead, *and* Galilee, *all the Land of* Naphtali, *and carried them into* Aſſyria, 2 Kings xv. 29. And 2dly, by *Salmanaſſer*, who *carried* Iſrael *away, and placed them in* Halah, *and in* Habor, *by the River* Gozan, *and in the Cities of the* Medes, 2 Kings xviii. 11. And to one of theſe, the Words of the Text are ſuppos'd by ſome learned Men to refer; but then it muſt neceſſarily follow, that this Book was written in later Times, even after the former of theſe Captivities at leaſt. It can hardly be ſuppos'd however, that theſe Images ſhould be ſuffer'd to continue in the Days of *David*, who was a Man after God's own Heart, and ſtudy'd to advance true Religion to the utmoſt of his Power all the Country over, from *Dan* to *Beerſheba*; and therefore others, with good Reaſon, conclude, that by *the Captivity of the Land* is meant the taking of the Ark by the *Philiſtines*, and carrying it Captive into the Temple of *Dagon*; for ſo the Pſalmiſt expreſsly

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

And the War of the Benjamites.

the *Philiſtines*, which was in the Days of *Samuel*.

NOT long after this, the War of the *Benjamites* broke out, which is another tragical Piece of Hiſtory, and as pregnant a Proof of the People's *Immorality*, as the other is of their *Apoſtacy*. The Subſtance of the Story is this. ——* A *Levite* of Mount *Ephraim*, having taken a Wife out of *Bethlehem-Judah*, who prov'd a lewd Woman, ſhe made an Elopement from her Huſband to her Father's Houſe, where ſhe continu'd for ſome Months. The *Levite* however, being willing to be reconcil'd to her, went to bring her home; but, in his Return, happening to be benighted, he was oblig'd to turn * into *Gibeah*, where an old Man of Mount *Ephraim*, who only was an *Inmate* there, after ſome Converſation, receiv'd him into his Lodgings. But, while they were at Supper, the Men of the City beſet the Houſe, and demanded to have the Stranger brought out to them, that, according to the Sin of *Sodom*, they might *know him*. 'Twas in vain to uſe Intreaties to ſo rude a Rabble. The good old Man offer'd them his own Daughter, who was a Virgin; and, at length by Conſent the *Levite*'s Wife was turn'd out among them. They abus'd her all that Night; and, the next Morning, ſhe was found dead at the Threſhold, which enrag'd her Huſband to ſuch a Degree, that, taking her home with him, he cut her dead Body into twelve *Parts*, and ſent one to every Tribe, with an Account of the *inhoſpitable* Treatment, he met with at *Gibeah*; that ſo, in a general Aſſembly of *Iſrael*, it might be reſolv'd, what Method of Revenge it was proper to take upon this diſmal Occaſion.

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THE Aſſembly agreed, that never ſo inhumane an Act had been known in *Iſrael*, ſince the Time they left *Egypt*; and thereupon came to a Reſolution, to bring the Offenders to condign Puniſhment, and, in order to that, ſent Meſſengers to them, demanding the Men, that had committed this Outrage; but they refus'd to deliver them, and, in order to defend the Criminals, muſter'd up all their Forces. The Army of the *Benjamites* conſiſted but of ſix and twenty Thouſand, whereas that of all *Iſrael* amounted to four hundred Thouſand Men; and yet, in two ſeveral Engagements, the *Benjamites* had the better of them; for in the *former*, they kill'd them twenty two Thouſand, and in the *latter*, eighteen Thouſand Men. But the Miſconduct of the *Iſraelites* upon this Occaſion was, that, being too confident of the Goodneſs of their Cauſe, and the Superiority of their Numbers, when they went to conſult God, they only enquir'd of him which of the Tribes ſhould lead the *Van*, without placing their Confidence in him, or depending upon his Aſſiſtance for Succeſs, which theſe repeated Defeats brought to their Remembrance; and therefore, before the third Engagement, they humbled themſelves in a proper Manner before God, and, from his Encouragement, attacked the *Benjamites* once more. But, to make their

preſsly calls that unlucky Event: *He forſook the Tabernacle in* Shiloh, *even the Tent that he had pitched among them; he delivered their Power into Captivity, and their Beauty into the Enemies Hands*, Pſal. lxxviii. 60, 61. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

* *Joſephus* relates this Story with a good deal of Variation from the ſacred Hiſtory: —— That the *Levite*'s Wife was not a *lewd* Woman, but one, who did not well agree with her Huſband, for which Reaſon ſhe left him, and went to her Father; that the young Men of *Gibeah*, ſeeing her to be a very beautiful Woman, took Notice of the Houſe, where ſhe went in, and came and demanded her, and not the *Levite* himſelf, as the Scripture has it; that the *Levite* did not turn her out, but that the young Men took her by Force, and carry'd her to their own Quarters, where they ſpent the whole Night in all Manner of *beſtial* Liberties, and then ſent her back again next Morning; that, upon her Return, ſhe fell into ſuch a Confuſion of Thought, for what had befallen her that Night, that (what between Shame and Indignation) ſhe ſunk down upon the Ground, and expir'd; that the *Iſraelites*, met in Convention, ſent to the *Benjamites* to deliver up the *Malefactors*, who had committed this brutal Violence upon the *Levite*'s Wife, which they refus'd to do, as thinking it diſhonourable for Fear of a War to ſubmit to Rules of other People's preſcribing, &c. *Joſephus*, Lib. v. c. 2.

* *Gibeah* lay *North* of *Jeruſalem*, about twenty or thirty Furlongs from it, and was built upon an Hill, as its Name imports. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

their Victory the more ſecure, they laid an Ambuſcade behind the City, which, while they pretended to fly, enter'd it, and ſet it on Fire; whereupon the main Body of the *Iſraelitiſh* Army fac'd about, and charg'd ſo furiouſly upon the *Benjamites*, that they ſlew five and twenty Thouſand of them, ſet Fire to their City, and deſtroy'd all that belong'd to them. It ſo happen'd however, that ſix hundred of them (which were all that remain'd of the Tribe) made their Eſcape into the Wilderneſs, and ſhelter'd themſelves in the Fortreſs of *Rimmon*.

The Manner of recruiting their ſlaughter'd Tribe.

When the Heat of the Action was over, and the *Iſraelites* began to reflect coolly on what they had done, they were griev'd not a little; and that the rather, becauſe, at the Beginning of this War, they had all taken a raſh Oath, not to marry their Daughters to any of the *Benjamites*: So that how to recruit the Tribe they could not tell, until they bethought themſelves of theſe two *Expedients*. When the War firſt broke out, they had bound themſelves by Oath, to put all to the Sword, who would not join them in the common Cauſe againſt the *Benjamites*; and finding by their *Muſter-Roll*, that the People of *Jabeſh-Gilead* had neglected to come, they diſpatch'd twelve Thouſand Men, with Orders to put Man, Woman, and Child to the Sword, except ſuch Virgins as were *marriageable*, whom they intended to give to the *Benjamites* for Wives. For, by this Time, the *Benjamites* were reconcil'd to the reſt of the People, had left their *Strong-hold*, and were come into the Camp; ſo that, when the Men return'd from the Slaughter of the *Gileadites*, they brought four hundred Virgins along with them, which were immediately given to the *Benjamites*; but as the *Benjamites* were ſix hundred in Number, there was not for every Man one, and therefore they betook themſelves to *another* Expedient.

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Once every Year, † there was a *Feſtival* kept at *Shiloh*, whither the young Women of the Country us'd conſtantly to come and dance. The *Iſraelites* therefore ſuggeſted to the *Benjamites*, that, as many as wanted Wives, might at this Time repair to the Place, and, concealing themſelves in the Vineyards, ſeize upon the young Women, as they came out a dancing, and carry them off to their own Habitations. The *Benjamites* accordingly purſu'd their Inſtructions; and, watching their Opportunity, took every one his Damſel away with him: So that, having by this Means got themſelves Wives, they ſettled again in their own Country, and began by Degrees to recruit their Tribe.

Ehud *murthers* Eglon, *King of* Moab, *and rejects his Country.*

After the Death of *Othniel*, the *Iſraelites* again revolted from the Service of God, and God, to chaſtiſe them for it, ſuffer'd *Eglon*, King of *Moab*, to ſubdue them; ſo that, for eighteen Years together, they were forc'd to be *tributary* to him. But, upon their Humiliation and Repentance, he rais'd them up a Man, even out of the diminiſh'd Tribe of *Benjamin*, who wrought their Deliverance, but in a Method no ways to be juſtify'd, under a leſs Suppoſition, than that he had a divine Commiſſion for ſo doing.

Every Year it was cuſtomary for the *Iſraelites* to ſend a *Preſent*, or Tribute to the King of *Moab*, and, for that Year, *Ehud*,

† All the three great Feſtivals were to be obſerv'd in the Place where God ſettled his Habitation, which was now at *Shiloh*; and therefore, ſome are of Opinion, that the Feaſt, here mention'd, was one of theſe; particularly, they think it was the *Feaſt of Tabernacles*, becauſe this was a Seaſon of great Joy, for having newly gather'd their Vintage, and the only Seaſon, wherein the *Jewiſh* Virgins were allow'd to dance. At this Time they dwelt in Booths too, behind which the *Benjamites* (as they fancy) might very conveniently conceal themſelves, and ſo watch an Opportunity of carrying away the Virgins: But what ſeems to make againſt this Opinion is, that, at any of theſe publick Feſtivals, the Concourſe of People would have been too great for a Deſign of this Nature to be put in Execution, ſince the Violence, which muſt of Courſe have been offer'd to the young Women, would hardly have met with a general Connivance. 'Tis much more probable therefore, that this was ſome Feſtival peculiar to the People of *Shiloh*, which the *Benjamites* perhaps might know nothing of, and were therefore put in Mind of it by *the Elders of the Congregation*. *Joſephus* tells us, that it was celebrated thrice every Year: And on this Feſtival it might be a Cuſtom for the young Women to go out into the Fields, and there dance by themſelves, which might give their Raviſhers the very Opportunity they wanted. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

A. M 2501, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1413, &c.

Ehud, the Son of *Gera*, was appointed to go with it. He was a left-handed Man; and, having a Deſign either to free his Country from this Oppreſſion, or periſh in the Attempt, he had for this Purpoſe provided himſelf with a Poniard, which he conceal'd on his right Side. After he had deliver'd the Preſent, pretending he had ſomething of great Importance to communicate to the King, he obtain'd a private Audience of him; when, taking his Opportunity, he ſtabb'd him with the Poniard to the Heart, and ſo ſhutting the Door after him, had Time to make his Eſcape. For, as the King was a very corpulent Man, his Attendants ſuppos'd that he was either repoſing or eaſing himſelf, and therefore forbore to enter into his Apartment, until *Ehud* was quite gone. As ſoon as he came to Mount *Ephraim*, he gather'd together the *Iſraelites* that lay neareſt him; acquainted them with what he had done; and then ſecuring the Fords of *Jordan*, that none of them might eſcape, he fell upon the *Moabites*, and deſtroy'd them all; ſo that, after this Conqueſt, the *eaſtern* Part of the Land of *Canaan* enjoy'd a ſettled Peace † for the Space of *fourſcore Years*.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

BUT tho' the *eaſtern* Coaſt was at Reſt, yet the *weſt* Parts of the Kingdom were ſadly moleſted by the Incurſions of the *Philiſtines*, who dwelt upon the ſame Shore of the *Mediterranean-Sea*. Upon this Occaſion, † *Shamgar*, the Son of *Anah*, aſſerted the Cauſe of *Iſrael*; and, having receiv'd extraordinary Vigour from above, with no better Weapon than an *Ox goad*, ſlew, at divers Times, ſix hundred of theſe Invaders, and preſerv'd the Peace of the Country for eight Years.

Deborah *and* Barak, *conquer* Siſera, *the General of* Jabin's *Forces*.

IN the *North* Parts of the Country however, the Idolatry, which *Micah* began, propagated apace; ſo that God, being highly incens'd at the People's Impieties, permitted *Jabin*, who, at that Time, aſſum'd the Title of King of *Canaan*, and † had fix'd his Imperial Seat at *Hazor*, to

† There are two Ways, wherein *the Land* (as it is in the Text) may be ſaid to have *had Reſt fourſcore Years*. If by the *Land*, we underſtand the whole Kingdom of *Iſrael*, the Meaning muſt be, that it reſted *about* fourſcore Years, or the *greateſt Part* of fourſcore Years: Becauſe it is a very common Thing in Scripture, to uſe Numbers in this Latitude, and, inſtead of a *minute* Computation, to make mention of the *round* Sum. Thus the *Iſraelites* are ſaid *to bear their Iniquities forty Years in the Wilderneſs*, Numb. xiv. 33. when there wanted almoſt two Years of that Number; and to *dwell in* Egypt *four hundred and thirty*, when, ſtrictly ſpeaking, there wanted ſeveral of it: And, in like Manner, the Land is here ſaid *to have had Reſt fourſcore Years*, when it is declared, at the ſame Time, that the People ſerv'd the King of *Moab eighteen* of them; nor is it any uncommon Thing, in other Authors, as well as the ſacred, to uſe this Form of Expreſſion. But 2dly, if by the Land, we underſtand only ſuch or ſuch a Part of it, the Solution is eaſy. For, it is but ſuppoſing, that there were ſcarce any of the *Judges*, who rul'd over the *whole* Country of *Iſrael*, but ſome in one Part, and ſome in another; ſo that, at the ſame Time, there were ſeveral Judges in the Land, and Peace in one Part, when there was War in another; and then we may (with the learned Sir *John Marſham*) underſtand here by *the Land, which had Reſt fourſcore Years*, not the *whole* Land of *Iſrael*, but the *Eaſtern* Part of it only, which had ſhaken off the Yoke of *Moab*, while, in the mean Time, the *Philiſtines* invaded the *Weſtern* Parts, even as *Jabin* afflicted the *Northern*, as we may ſee in the following Chapter. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Of what Tribe this valiant Perſon was, we are no where inform'd; but it is not unlikely, that he was of one of thoſe Tribes, which border'd upon the *Philiſtines*, *Judah*, *Dan*, or *Ephraim*, becauſe what he did, was againſt them. It is diſputed by ſome, whether he is to be reckon'd among the Number of the *Judges*; but for this, I think, there is no Foundation. The ſhort Account, which the Scripture gives of him, is this:——*And after him*, i. e. after *Ehud*, *was* Shamgar, *the Son of* Anah, *which ſlew of the* Philiſtines *ſix hundred Men with an Ox goad, and alſo deliver'd* Iſrael, Judg. iii. 31. After *Ehud* was *Shamgar*, i. e. he ſucceeded him in the Office of a *Judge*, for this is the natural Senſe of the Words; and *he alſo delivered* Iſrael, which is the very Phraſe, whereby the *Judges* are deſcrib'd. It is not ſaid indeed from what Oppreſſions he deliver'd him; but he is a Deliverer, who preſerves a Nation from being oppreſs'd, as well as he, who reſcues them from an Oppreſſion when they groan under it. This, in all Probability, was *Shamgar*'s Caſe, who, when the *Philiſtines* invaded his Country, gave them a Repulſe, with the Loſs of ſix hundred of their Men, which was enough to diſcourage them from all future Attempts. And indeed, the great Slaughter which he made among them, with a Weapon, in all Appearance, ſo incompetent for the Work, argues him to have been a *Judge*, and poſſeſs'd of a Divine Power, as much as *Samſon* was, who ſlew a thouſand of his Enemies *with the Jaw-bone of an Aſs*. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† It is very certain, that *Joſhua* burnt the City *Hazor*, and ſlew the King thereof, whoſe Name in like Manner was *Jabin*, which might poſſibly be the common Name to all the Kings of the Country, as thoſe of *Egypt* were call'd *Pharaoh*: But it ſeems not improbable, that this *Hazor* might be retaken, and rebuilt by its antient Inhabitants, and

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

to oppreſs them with great Severity for forty Years. This Prince had made *Siſera*, (* an experienc'd Soldier no doubt) General of his Forces, wherein, beſides great Store of other *military* Munition, there were nine hundred arm'd Chariots, which terrify'd the *Iſraelites* to ſuch a Degree, that * ſeveral Tribes, *(a)* deſpairing of Relief, ſat ſtill under their Oppreſſion, and ſome of them were going *(b)* to tranſport themſelves into other Countries. For their Enemies were ſo very cruel to them, that they durſt not travel the common Roads, nor dwell in Villages, for fear of being murther'd or plunder'd; and, having no Arms left to defend themſelves, they were forc'd to retire to fortify'd Places, and there live together in the utmoſt Conſternation.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

In the midſt of this Diſtreſs, † *Deborah*, the Propheteſs, a Woman of great Eminence, and who, for ſome Time, had adminiſter'd Juſtice to the neighbouring Tribes, ſent to *Barak*, the Son of *Abinoam*, a Meſſage from God, that he ſhould get together ten Thouſand Men of the Tribes of *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*, and march them to † Mount *Tabor*, whither *Siſera*,

and that this King might be a Deſcendant of the other. Some indeed interpret the Words thus——That this *Jabin* was King of that Part of *Canaan*, which lay in the Country, where *Hazor* formerly ſtood, and whoſe Seat then was at *Haroſheth of the Gentiles*; for they underſtand this Place to be mention'd in the Text, as the Dwelling-place, not of *Siſera*, but of *Jabin* himſelf, whoſe General *Siſera* was. But there is no Reaſon for this Inverſion of the Order of the Words, ſince the *Canaanites* might, between the Time of *Joſhua* and *Deborah*, find frequent Opportunities (conſidering the Corruption and Idleneſs of the *Iſraelites)* to re-eſtabliſh their antient Kingdom in theſe Parts, to rebuild their former *Capital*, and to ſet up one of the old *royal* Line to be their King; who (according to the common Uſages of thoſe Ages) retain'd one and the ſame Name with his Predeceſſors. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II. c. 6.

* This *Siſera* (as *Joſephus* informs us) was a very great Favourite of the King's, for the Services he had done, in reducing the *Iſraelites*, whom he worſted upon ſeveral Encounters, Time after Time, and would never give over the Purſuit, till he brought them at laſt to be abſolute Slaves, and Tributaries to his Maſter. Antiq. lib. v. c. 6.

* This is the Senſe of thoſe obſcure Paſſages in the Song of *Deborah*. *For the Diviſions of* Reuben *there were great Thoughts of Heart. Why abodeſt thou among the Sheepfolds, to hear the Bleatings of the Flocks?* Gilead *abode beyond* Jordan, *and why did* Dan *remain in Ships?* Aſhur *continued on the Sea-ſhore, and abode in his Creeks,* &c. Judg. v. 15, &c.

(a) Judg. v. 15, 16. *(b)* Ibid. viii. 17.

† The Words *Prophet*, and *Propheteſs*, are of very ambiguous Signification in both *Teſtaments:* Sometimes they denote Perſons extraordinary inſpir'd by God, and endu'd with the Power of working Miracles, and foretelling Things to come; and ſometimes they are us'd for Perſons endu'd with *ſpecial*, though not miraculous Gifts, or Graces, for the better underſtanding and explaining the Word of God; and of this Sort were the Sons of the Prophets, or ſuch as were brought up in the Schools of the Prophets. As therefore we read nothing of any miraculous Action, that *Deborah* did, ſhe perhaps was only a Woman of eminent Holineſs, and Prudence, and Knowledge of the holy Scripture, by which ſhe was ſingularly qualify'd to *judge the People*, i. e. to determine Cauſes and Controverſies among them, according to the Word of God. For, though *Jabin* oppreſs'd them ſorely, yet it was rather by rigorous Taxations, than infringing their Laws, which he ſtill ſuffer'd to be adminiſter'd by their own Officers: And of this he might take the leſs Notice, becauſe the ſupreme Judicature was exercis'd by a Woman, from whoſe Power and Authority he thought there was no Reaſon to apprehend any Danger; though this certainly gave her an Opportunity of endearing herſelf to the People, and made her, by this Means, the fitter Inſtrument to reſcue them from Oppreſſion. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† *Tabor* is a very remarkable Mountain in *Galilee*, not far from *Kadeſh*, in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, and in the Confines of *Iſſachar* and *Naphtali*. It has its Name from its *Eminence*, becauſe it riſes up in the midſt of a wide champaign Country, call'd the Valley of *Jezreel*, or the great Plain. *Joſephus* tells us, that the *Height* of this Mountain is thirty *Stadia*, and that on the Top of it, there is a beautiful Plain of twenty Stadia in Circumference. By all which it appears how commodious a Place this Mountain was, to be the Rendezvous of *Barak*'s Forces, ſince it ſtood upon the Confines of ſo many different Tribes, was not acceſſible by the Enemies Horſes and Chariots, and had, on the Top of it, a ſpacious Plain, where he might conveniently marſhal and diſcipline his Army. What modern Travellers tell us of this Mountain is much to the ſame Purpoſe:——"After a very laborious Aſcent, (ſays Mr "*Maundrell)* we reach the higheſt Part of the Mountain, which has a plain *Area* at Top, fertile and delicious, and "of an oval Figure, about one Furlong in Breadth, and two in Length. This *Area* is inclos'd with Trees on all "Parts, except towards the *South*, and from hence you have a Proſpect, which (if nothing elſe) well rewards the "Labour of aſcending it; for it is impoſſible for the Eyes of Man to behold any greater Gratification of this Nature. "The Top of this Mountain was antiently environ'd with Walls, and Trenches, and other Fortifications, of which "ſome Remains are ſtill viſible; and, for many Ages, it has been believ'd, that here it was, that our bleſſed Savi"our was *tranſfigured*, in the Preſence of his three Apoſtles, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, though ſome later Writers "have made a Doubt of it." *Calmet*'s Commentary, *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Maundrell*'s Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jeruſalem*.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

Siſera, with all his numerous Army, coming to give him Battle, ſhould infallibly be routed. *Barak* readily agreed to the Motion, upon Condition, that the *Propheteſs* would go with him: And ſo, having muſter'd up his Complement of Forces, they both went together, and poſted themſelves upon Mount *Tabor*. *Siſera* had ſoon Intelligence of this; and, getting a powerful Army together, he made haſty Marches from † *Haroſheth*; paſs'd the * River *Kiſhon*; and encamp'd at the Foot of the Mountain, in hopes of cutting off *Barak*'s Retreat. Upon this, *Deborah* adviſ'd *Barak* not to ſtay till *Siſera* came up to him, but, early next Morning, to march directly down, and fall upon him, with all the Aſſurance imaginable of Succeſs. The *Hebrew* General follow'd her Directions; and, coming down upon the Enemy before they were aware, he charg'd them with ſuch Fury, * whilſt God, at the ſame Time, (by a driving Storm of Rain and Hail in their Faces,) ſtruck them with ſuch Terror, that they were not able to ſtand before the *Iſraelites*, but were ſoon broken, and put to Flight. The Purſuit however continu'd all Day; and, as the Night approach'd, the Stars ſhone with an uncommon Brightneſs, to give Light to the Purſuers; and the River *Kiſhon*, * being ſwell'd with the haſty Rain, drown'd the *Purſu'd*, and carry'd the dead Bodies away towards the *Mediterranean-Sea*.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

SISERA, in the mean Time, ſeeing his whole Army broken and diſpers'd, quitted his Chariot, and was making his Eſcape on Foot; when *Jael*, the Wife † of *Heber* the *Kenite*, ſeeing him coming, went

Jael *puts him to Death.*

† A Place, ſituated upon the Lake *Semechon*, in the *Upper Galilee*, and is, in Scripture, called *Haroſheth of the Gentiles*, becauſe the People of ſeveral Nations fled thither to be under *Jabin*'s Protection, when they heard that he had poſſeſs'd himſelf of that Country, and kept the *Iſraelites* out of it. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

* This River riſes out of Mount *Tabor*, and, paſſing along the Valley of *Jezreel*, (now the Plain of *Eſdraelon*) empties itſelf into the *Mediterranean-Sea*. Some Geographers will needs have it, that this River runs two Ways, partly *weſtward*, into the *Mediterranean*, and partly *eaſtward*, into the *Sea of Galilee*; but this is a Thing incredible, and what is known of no other River in the World; and therefore, if there be any thing in it, the Matter muſt be this———That, from Mount *Tabor*, (as it happens from many other Hills) there flow Waters out of two of its Sides, ſome ſhaping their Courſe *weſtward*, to the *Mediterranean*, and others *eaſtward*, into the *Sea of Galilee*: So that there are two Spring-heads, and two diſtinct Rivers, though both ariſing from the ſame Mountain, and perhaps both called by the ſame Name. But whatever becomes of the River that runs *eaſtward*, 'tis plain, from another Paſſage, that the *Kiſhon*, which is mention'd in Scripture, ran weſtward into the *Mediterranean-Sea*; for, when *Elijah* had convinc'd the People, aſſembl'd together at Mount *Carmel*, that *Baal* was not the true God, he enjoin'd them to ſeize all his Prieſts, and to bring them down to the Brook *Kiſhon*, there to be ſlain, 1 *Kings* xviii. So that the Brook *Kiſhon*, which riſes out of Mount *Tabor*, muſt run by Mount *Carmel*, which ſtands on the *Sea-ſhore*; and, as *Carmel* ſtands *Weſt* of Mount *Tabor*, the Courſe of the River, which extends from the one to the other, muſt be ſo likewiſe. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II. c. 6.

* *Joſephus* relates the Manner of God's Interpoſition in this Action, in the following Words. "The Armies "were no ſooner engag'd, but there aroſe a violent Wind, with a moſt impetuous Tempeſt of Hail and Rain along "with it. The Storm, driving juſt in the Face of the *Canaanites*, made not only their Bows and their Slings uſe"leſs, but their Weapons likewiſe deſign'd for cloſe Fight; for they could not ſo much as open their Eyes againſt "the Weather; and their Fingers were ſo benumb'd with Cold too, that they could not handle their Arms.——— "In the Concluſion, it came to paſs, that the *Canaanites* Army was broken, diſpers'd, and cut to Pieces: So that, "betwixt thoſe that fell by the Sword, thoſe that were trampled to Death under the Horſes Feet, thoſe that were "torn to Pieces by the Chariots, and thoſe that fled away, and fell into the Hands of the *Iſraelites* in their Flight, "this prodigious Army, which (according to our Author) conſiſted of thirty Thouſand Foot, ten Thouſand Horſe, "and three Thouſand armed Chariots, was, in effect, totally deſtroy'd." Antiq. lib. v. c. 6.

* Mr *Maundrell* tells us, that, in the Condition wherein he ſaw this River, its Waters were low and inconſiderable; but, in paſſing along the Side of the Plain, he diſcern'd the Tracts of many leſſer Torrents falling down into it from the Mountains, which muſt needs make it ſwell exceedingly upon ſudden Rains. Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jeruſalem*.

† He was of the Poſterity of *Hobab*, the Son of *Jethro*, Father-in-Law of *Moſes*; and is here call'd a *Kenite*, becauſe originally, he deſcended from thoſe People who dwelt *weſtward* of the *Dead Sea*, and extended themſelves pretty far into *Arabia Petræa*. The Word *Ken* (from whence they took their Name) ſignifies a *Neſt*, an *Hole*, or a *Cave*; and to this the Prophet *Balaam* might allude, when he addreſſes himſelf to them in theſe Words:———*Strong is thy dwelling Place, and thou putteſt thy* Neſt *on a Rock: Neverthelefs the* Kenite *ſhall be waſted, until* Aſhur *ſhall carry thee* away *captive*, Numb. xxiv. 21. Theſe *Kenites* indeed were ſome of the People, whoſe Lands God had promis'd

to

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1443, &c.

went to meet him, and invited him into her Tent; which he readily accepted, as apprehending no Danger from her, whoſe Huſband was his Maſter's Ally. The Fatigue of the Day had made him very thirſty, and therefore he intreated *Jael* to give him a little Water; but when, inſtead of Water, ſhe had given him as much Milk as he deſir'd, and he had ſtrictly charg'd her to deny him, in Caſe that any body ſhould enquire for him, he laid himſelf down to reſt. No ſooner was he well aſleep, but *Jael*, taking an Hammer and a long Tent-Nail, ſet it to his Temples, and ſtruck with ſuch a Force, that it quite pierc'd through his Head, and pinned him to the Ground; and when *Barak*, in Purſuit of him, came that Way, ſhe call'd him in, and ſhew'd him the Place, and Poſture, in which his Enemy lay.

Deborah *makes a triumphant Song upon the whole Occaſion.*

THIS Victory, which was follow'd * with new Succeſſes every Day, put an End to the Oppreſſion of the *North* for forty Years. It prov'd the utter Ruin of this Kingdom of the *Canaanites* in *Hazor*: And, upon many Accounts, was attended with ſo many ſignal Events, that the Propheteſs *Deborah* thought it not amiſs to compoſe a *triumphant* Song in Commemoration of it; wherein ſhe magnifies the Deliverance it wrought, by recounting the many Calamities, which the *Iſraelites* before labour'd under; acknowledges its proceeding from the ſame divine Being, who deſcended in great Majeſty to give the Law on Mount *Sinai*; calls upon all thoſe, who partook in the Benefits of it, to join in the Praiſes of its great Author; commends thoſe Tribes, that came readily to the War, and upbraids all thoſe, who declin'd their Countries Service.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

The Story of Ruth *here inſerted.*

DURING this forty Years Peace, the People again rebell'd againſt God, and God took the Puniſhment of them into his own Hands, by ſending upon them a grievous Famine, wherein ſeveral were forc'd to remove into ſtrange Countries; and, among the reſt, † one *Elimelech*, a Man of *Bethlehem*, with his Wife *Naomi*, and his two Sons, *Mahlon* and *Chilion*, went into the Land of *Moab* to live. *Elimelech* died there, and his *Relict* marry'd her Sons to two Women of the Country, whoſe Names were *Orpah* and *Ruth*. About two Years after this, *Naomi*'s two Sons died, and ſhe, reſolving to return to her own Country, deſir'd her Daughters-in-

to the Deſcendants of *Abraham*; nevertheleſs, in Conſideration of *Jethro*, all that ſubmitted to the *Iſraelites*, were permitted to live in their own Country. In *Numb.* x. 29. we find, that *Hobab* was invited by *Moſes* to accompany him into the Land of *Canaan*, and, in all Probability, he accepted the Invitation. At their firſt Coming, they ſettled themſelves in the Territories of *Jericho*; but, having contracted a particular Friendſhip with the Tribe of *Judah*, they remov'd with them into the Country, that fell to their Lot, *Judg.* i. 16. Every Family of them, however, did not ſo, for this *Heber* we find, for ſome Reaſons, that are not mention'd, had ſettl'd his Habitation in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, Judg. i. 11. The *Kenites* indeed, though they were *Proſelytes*, and worſhipp'd the true God according to the *Moſaick* Law, yet being Strangers by Birth, and ſo not pretending to any Right or Title to the Land of *Canaan*, held it beſt Policy, in thoſe troubleſome Times, to obſerve a *Neutrality*, and maintain Peace, as well as they could, both with the *Iſraelites* and *Canaanites*; and upon this Foot it was, that there was a Peace with King *Jabin* and the Houſe of *Heber*, and that *Siſera*, in his Diſtreſs, fled to *Heber*'s Tent for Protection, and put Confidence in the feign'd Civilities of his Wife. *Howell*'s Hiſtory of the Bible.

* *Joſephus* farther acquaints us, that immediately after this Victory, *Barak* march'd with his Army towards *Hazor*, where he encounter'd *Jabin* by the Way, and ſlew him; and, having kill'd the King, laid the City level with the Ground, and afterwards govern'd *Iſrael* for a matter of forty Years. Antiq. lib. v. c. 6.

† The Book of *Ruth*, which takes its Title from the Perſon, whoſe Story is there principally recorded, is properly an Appendix to the Book of *Judges*, and an Introduction to that of *Samuel*, and is therefore not only plac'd between them, but ſuppos'd to be wrote by one and the ſame Hand. Its Subject is very different from the reſt, and is therefore made a diſtinct Treatiſe. It is indeed of ſo private a Nature, that, at the Time of its being wrote, the Generality of the People might have thought it not worth recording; but we *Chriſtians* may plainly ſee the Wiſdom of God in having it done. It had been foretold to the *Jews*, that the MESSIAH ſhould be of the Tribe of *Judah*, and it was afterwards revealed farther, that he ſhould be of the Family of *David*: And therefore it was neceſſary, for the full underſtanding theſe Prophecies, that the Hiſtory of the Family of *David*, in that Tribe, ſhould be written before theſe Prophecies were reveal'd, that ſo there might not be the leaſt Suſpicion of any Fraud or Deſign. And thus this Book, theſe Prophecies, and the Accompliſhment of them, ſerve to illuſtrate, and explain each other. *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, Lib. v. c. 5.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

in-law to remain in *Moab*. *Orpah*, with Tears, took leave of her Mother; but *Ruth* could, by no means, be perſwaded to part with her, and therefore ſhe accompany'd her to *Bethlehem*, where, by † her Mother's Art and Contrivance, ſhe ſo manag'd the Matter, that ſhe marry'd *Boaz*, by whom ſhe had *Obed*, who was the Father of *Jeſſe*, and the Grand-Father of *David*, and from whom (according to the Fleſh) the Saviour of the World was lineally deſcended.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

The Midianites *oppreſs the* Iſraelites.

AFTER the Death of *Deborah* and *Barak*, the *Iſraelites* fell again into their old Impiety, and were again given up into the Hand of their Enemies. The *Midianites* were a People ſituated on the Eaſt Side of the River *Jordan*, whom the Children of *Iſrael*, in their Paſſage to the Land of *Canaan*, *(c)* had almoſt totally deſtroy'd; but it is not improbable, that ſome of that Nation, ſaving themſelves by Flight into other Countries, and, after the *Iſraelites* were ſettled in *Canaan*, returning thither again, might, in the Space of two hundred Years, repoſſeſs the Land, where they dwelt before, and ſtill retain the Name of *Midianites*. Theſe People, together with their Neighbours, the *Amalekites*, † and ſome other *eaſtern* Nations, for ſeven Years, kept the *Iſraelites* in ſuch Subjection, that they were forc'd to betake themſelves to the Mountains, and to dwell in Dens, and Caves, and fortify'd Places, from whence, as the *Spring* came on, they ſtole out, to cultivate and ſow their Land; but all to no Purpoſe: For, towards the Time of *Harveſt*, theſe Enemies made Inroads into the Country, and, having deſtroy'd the Increaſe of the Earth, and kill'd all the Cattle which fell into their Hands, they then return'd home, and left the poor *Iſraelites* nothing to ſupport themſelves withal. Upon this ſore Calamity, the People began to be ſenſible of their *Apoſtacy*, and to humble themſelves under the afflicting Hand of God; whereupon God † ſent them a *Prophet*, who reproach'd them ſharply with their baſe Ingratitude, but, at the ſame Time, † ſent his Angel to *Gideon* the Son of *Joaſh*, who dwelt at † *Ophrah*, and was then

God makes Choice of Gideon *for their Deliverer.*

† The whole Management of this Affair is recorded in the Book of *Ruth*, to which we refer our Reader, having leſs Reaſon to be prolix in a Matter that concerns a *private* Family only, and what had not been related in ſuch a particular Manner, but for the Reaſons that we have already aſſign'd.

(c) Numb. xxxi. 7, &c.

† Tho' the *Midianites* were the principal People concern'd in theſe Invaſions and Inroads, yet, beſides the *Amalekites*, they had other confederate Nations, who are call'd the *Children of the Eaſt*, Judg. vi. 3, 33. by whom we may underſtand the *Ammonites*, and *Moabites*, as lying *Eaſt* of the *Land of Iſrael*, if not the *Iſhmaelites*, and others that inhabited the Parts of *Arabia*. The *Children* or People *of the Eaſt*, in Gen. xxix. 1. denote the Inhabitants of *Meſopotamia*; but theſe ſeem to be too far diſtant to have any Part in theſe Incurſions; and therefore, ſince we read, (Gen. xxv. 6.) that *Abraham* ſent away the Sons of his *Concubines*, particularly the Sons of *Keturah*, (one whereof was *Midian*, the Father of the *Midianites*) *eaſtward, into the Eaſt Country*, it may not improbably be inferr'd, that, by *the Children of the Eaſt*, in this Hiſtory of *Gideon*, are denoted the Deſcendants of the other Sons of *Keturah*, and of the other Brothers of *Midian*, who had ſettled themſelves in the *eaſtern* Parts, adjoining to *Midian*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament.

† Who this *Prophet* was, we have no Manner of Intimation given us. The *Jews* generally fancy, that he was *Phineas*; but *Phineas* muſt by this Time have been above two hundred Years old, which far exceeded the *ſtated* Period of human Life then. St *Auſtin* is of Opinion, that he was the ſame with the *Angel*, which ſoon after appear'd to *Gideon*; but it is far more likely, that God ſtill continu'd other Prophets among the *Iſraelites*, beſides the High-Prieſt, to put them in mind of their Duty, and to call them to Repentance, when they forſook him: For, from the Caſe of *Deborah*, who is ſaid to have had the Spirit of Prophecy, it appears, that, at leaſt in extraordinary Caſes, God fail'd not to raiſe up ſuch Perſons among them. It is remark'd however of this *Prophet*, (be he who he will) that he gave the *Iſraelites* no Hopes of the Divine Aſſiſtance, but only upbraided them with their Sins. However, when he tells them, that their Calamities was occaſion'd by their Idolatry, he plainly intimates, that, if they would return to the true Worſhip of God, he would again look graciouſly upon them, and deliver them; and accordingly we find, that the Hiſtory of their Deliverance immediately follows. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† That he was not a mere created Angel, is plain from the incommunicable Name *Jehovah*, which he aſſumes, and whereby he ſuffers himſelf ſo frequently to be call'd, Judges vi. 14, 16, 23, 24, 25, 27. And therefore the *Jews*, according to their *Targum*, which ſtiles him the *Word of the Lord*, look upon this Angel, not merely as an heavenly Meſſenger ſent from God, but as the Son of God himſelf appearing in the Form of an Angel. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† *Gideon* was of the Family of *Abiezer*, of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*; and ſo the *Ophrah*, where he dwelt, muſt be underſtood

A. M. 2516, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1443, &c.

then threshing out his Corn, in a private and unsuspected Place, the better to conceal it from the Depredation of the Enemy.

To him the Angel signify'd the Purport of his Message, which was to acquaint him, that the Lord had made Choice of him for the Deliverance of his People. *Gideon* at first excus'd himself upon Account of the Obscurity of his Family and Fortune; and, when the Angel urg'd the Thing, he desir'd of him some Token of the Divine Mission, and, at the same Time, requested him to accept of a small Entertainment from his Hands. The Angel seem'd not to refuse the Invitation, whereupon *Gideon* hasten'd, and having boil'd a Kid, and made some unleaven'd Cakes, he spread a Table, and set them before him; but the Angel order'd him to take them thence, and place them upon a Rock hard by, and so pour the Broth upon them, which, though it might seem a little strange, *Gideon* did; and, as soon as the Angel had touch'd them with the Staff that was in his Hand, immediately there issu'd Fire out of the Rock, which consum'd them, whilst himself, at the same Time, vanish'd out of Sight.

Convinc'd by this Miracle, that it was a Messenger from Heaven who appear'd to him, *Gideon* began to fear (as the Notion then was) that he should not long survive it; but being assur'd by the Angel (tho' then invisible) that no Harm should befal him, he built a Monument, which he called *Jehovah-shalom*, i. e. *the Lord of Peace*, in Commemoration of this gracious Interview; and, being that Night admonish'd in a Dream to destroy the Altar of *Baal*, and cut down the Grove that surrounded it; to build an Altar to God upon the Top of this wonderful Rock, and to offer a Burnt-Sacrifice to him with one of his Father's Bullocks, he readily obey'd: And, taking ten of his Father's Servants with him, demolish'd the *one*, and erected the *other*, by next Morning; chusing the Night to do it in, that he might meet with no Obstruction. On the Morrow, when the People understood that *Gideon* was the Person, who had put this Affront upon *Baal*, they came and demanded him of his Father, that they might put him to Death; but, instead of complying with their Demand, his Father's Answer was, "That "† if *Baal* was a God, it was *his* Busi- "ness, and not *theirs*, to avenge his own "Quarrel;" and from this Answer (wherewith he appeas'd the Tumult) *Gideon* ever after obtain'd the Name of *Jerub-baal*, i. e. *the Opposer of* Baal.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

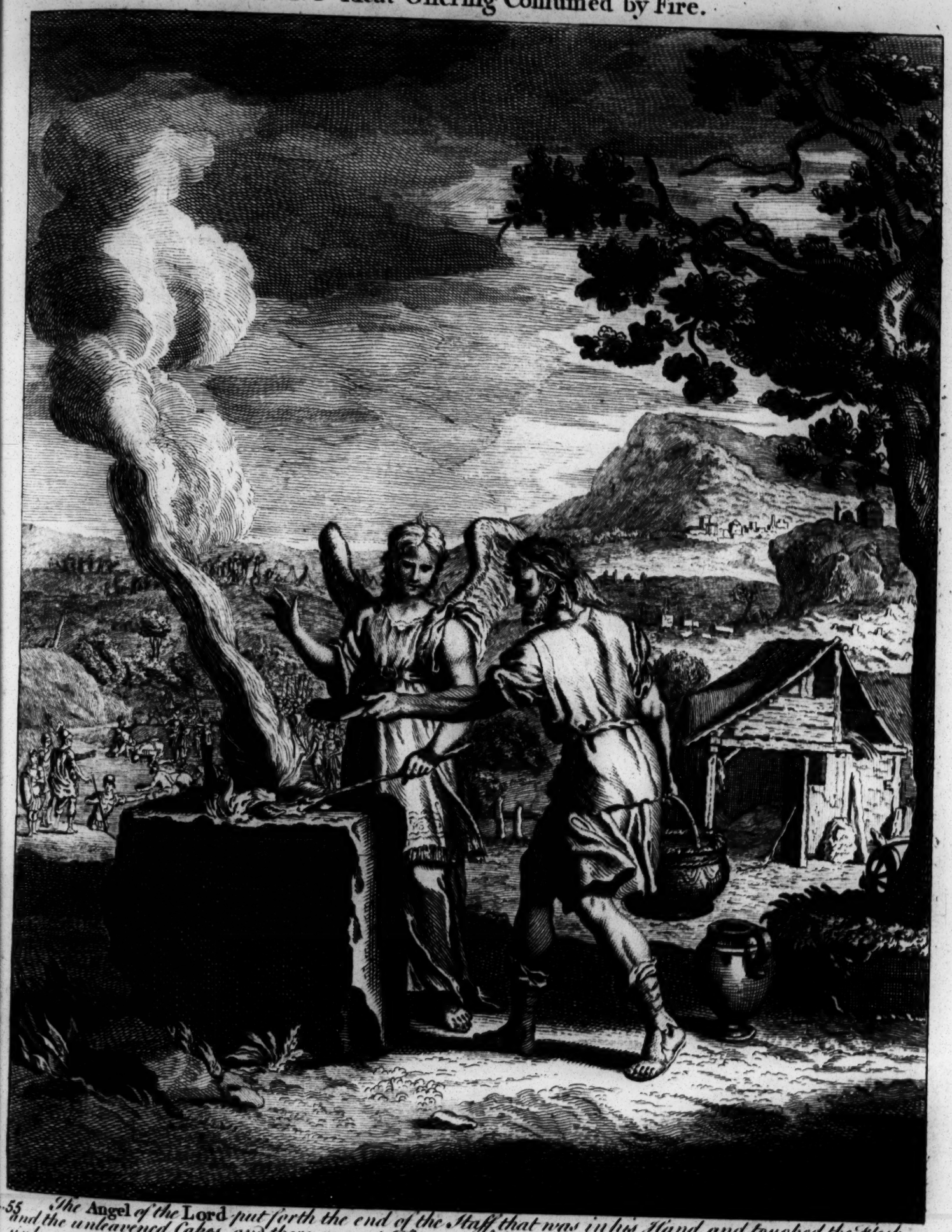
About this Time, the *Midianites* and their Company passing over the River *Jordan*, came, and encamp'd in † the Valley of *Jezreel*; upon which, *Gideon*, being mov'd by a Divine Impulse, summon'd all those of his own Family to take up Arms first, and then sent Messengers to several adjacent Tribes, exhorting them to shake off the Yoke of the *Midianites*, and to join with him; which accordingly they did, and came in such Numbers, that in a short Time, his Army amounted to two and thirty Thousand Men, though small in Comparison of the Enemies Forces, which

understood to be situated in the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, on the *West* Side of *Jordan*, and for this Reason it is stil'd *Ophrah* of the *Abiezrites*, (Judges viii. 32.) to distinguish it from another *Ophrah*, that lay in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. III. c. 6.

† 'Tis generally suppos'd, that *Gideon*'s Father had been a Worshipper, if not a Priest of *Baal*; and therefore it is not unlikely, that he had at this Time been convinc'd by his Son, that God had given him a Commission to recover his People, and to begin with this Reformation; and this made him appear so boldly in his Son's Cause, because he knew it was the Cause of God. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The City of *Jezreel* (which gave Name to the Valley) belong'd to the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, on the *West* of *Jordan*, and lay in the Confines of that *half* Tribe and the Tribe of *Issachar*, as appears from *Josh.* xix. 18. In the History of the Kings of *Israel*, this City is frequently made mention of, where, by Reason of the Pleasantness of its Situation, some of them had a Royal Palace, tho' their *Capital* was *Samaria*. The *Vale of Jezreel* (which, as we said before, is now call'd the Plain of *Esdraelon*) is, according to Mr *Maundrell*, of a vast Extent, very fertile, but uncultivated, and only serving the *Arabs* for Pasturage: But some have suppos'd, that the *Valley of Jezreel* here mention'd denotes some other lesser Valley, lying between Mount *Hermon* and Mount *Gilboa*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Testament, Vol. II. c. 6.

GIDEON's Meat Offering Consumed by Fire.



Pl. 55. *The* **Angel** *of the* **Lord** *put forth the end of the Staff that was in his Hand and touched the Flesh and the unleavened Cakes, and there rose up Fire out of the Rock and consumed the Flesh and the unleavened Cakes.* — **Judges Chap. VI. Ve. 21.**

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He vanquiſhes the Midianites, *in what Manner.*

which conſiſted of no leſs than a hundred and thirty-five Thouſand.

As ſoon as each Tribe's Complement of Men was arriv'd, *Gideon* (being willing to ſatisfy them, that he did not act this on his own Head, but was the Perſon appointed by Heaven to be their *Leader* and *Deliverer*) deſir'd of God to give them ſome Token of his Commiſſion; and the Token, which he made choice of, was,— That, upon his laying a *Fleece* of Wool on the Ground, † the Dew might be upon the Fleece only, and the Earth round about it be dry, which accordingly happen'd; and then, inverting the former Manner he deſir'd, that the Fleece might be dry, while the Ground all a-round it was wet, which accordingly came to paſs likewiſe. Confirm'd by theſe Signs, that it was the Will of God that he ſhould enter upon Action, *Gideon* march'd directly to the Camp of the *Midianites*, who then lay in the Plain of *Jezreel*; but, before he came thither, God rightly foreſeeing, that, if this Army conquer'd the *Midianites*, they would vainly impute it to their own Courage or Numbers, and not to his Aſſiſtance, order'd *Gideon* to make *Proclamation* in the Camp, that whoever was diffident of the Succeſs of the Undertaking, ſhould have Liberty to return Home: Whereupon two and twenty Thouſand quitted the Field, ſo that ten thouſand only remain'd with him. It might be thought poſſible however, for theſe ten Thouſand to defeat the Army of the *Midianites*; and therefore God, reſolving that the Glory of the whole Victory ſhould be accounted his own, order'd *Gideon* to † lead the Soldiers down to the Water to drink, where he would give him a Signal, what Men were fit for his Purpoſe, and what not; and the Signal was this,—— That they, who † took up Water in their Hands, and lapped it, ſhould go with him; but they, who laid themſelves down to drink, ſhould be diſmiſs'd; which Experiment reduc'd them to no more than three Hundred.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

THESE

† He ſuppos'd that the Dew, which diſtill'd from Heaven, was a Divine Gift, (as the Scripture after teſtifies) and therefore he deſir'd that it might be directed by God, that, tho' it commonly falls every where, by his extraordinary Providence, it might now water only his Fleece Some are apt to think, that he choſe a Fleece for his Purpoſe, not only becauſe it was ready at hand, but the better to expreſs how the Land was *ſhorn* by the *Midianites*, even as the Sheep had been by him; that when he begg'd the Dew (as a Sign of the Divine Favour) might fall upon the *Fleece*, it was to repreſent the Kindneſs of God to *him*; and when he begg'd it might fall upon the whole Ground, to repreſent his Favour to *all the People*. But there is a farther Reaſon, why he might deſire to have the Miracle inverted: For, as it is in the very Nature of the wool to draw Moiſture to it, ſome might be apt to think, that there was no great Matter in this; and therefore he requeſted of God a ſecond Miracle, which was contrary to the former. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Mr *Le Clerc* is of Opinion, that the *ſacred* Hiſtorian has omitted one Circumſtance, which, nevertheleſs, in the very Nature of the Thing, is imply'd, *viz.* that *Gideon*, when he led his Men down to the Water, did forbid them to make uſe of any Cup, or Pot, or ſuch like Thing: For he thinks it incongruous, (as well he may) that, among ſuch a Number, as ten Thouſand Men, no one ſhould be furniſh'd with ſome drinking Veſſel or other. But then, had any of theſe been permitted to be us'd upon this Occaſion, the Experiment could not have been made. Comment. in *Jud.* vii. 6.

† Interpreters are at a ſad Puzzle to conceive, for what poſſible Reaſon God made a Diſtinction between the Soldiers who lapp'd Water in their Hands, and thoſe that laid themſelves down to drink. Some of the *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that all, except the three Hundred, who lapp'd, had been accuſtom'd to the Worſhip of *Baal*, which they unwarily diſcover'd by their kneeling to drink: But this is a groundleſs, and far-fetch'd Conceit. The Notion of thoſe, who impute theſe three Hundred Men's Lapping *ſome* to their *Sloth* and *Lazineſs*, and *others* to their *Timorouſneſs*, and the great Fear they were in of being ſurpris'd by the Enemy, is of no more Validity: For though God, if he thought fit, might have employ'd the moſt *daſtardly* among them upon this Expedition, that the Glory of the Victory might entirely redound to himſelf; yet ſince, as we are told, all the fearful Perſons were diſmiſs'd before, and ſince it but badly befits the Character of the *Courageous* to be *lazy*; this Action of *Lapping* is rather to be accounted a Token of their *Temperance*, and of the Nobleneſs of their Spirit, which made them ſo deſirous to engage the Enemy that they would not ſtay to drink, but (tho' they were very thirſty) contented themſelves to *moiſten their Mouths*, as we ſay, with a little Water; whereas the reſt indulg'd themſelves ſo far, as to drink their Belly-full. But after all, the true Reaſon and Deſign of this Method ſeems to be only this, ——— That God was minded to reduce *Gideon*'s Army to a very ſmall Number, which might very likely be done by this Means. For, as the Seaſon of the Year was hot, and the Generality of the Soldiers weary, thirſty, and faint, it was moſt probable, that they would lye down, (as indeed they did) and refreſh themſelves plentifully, and ſcarce to be expected, that any great Number would deny themſelves in this Matter. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Saurin*'s Gedéon Defait les *Madiantes*.

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THESE there hundred Men he order'd to hold themſelves in Readineſs, and to have every one a Trumpet, a Lamp, and an empty Pitcher to conceal the Light, which the Lamp would otherwiſe give; and, while they were providing themſelves with theſe, he took his Servant with him, and went down the Enemies Camp, where he heard a *Midianite* relating his Dream to his Companion, which the other interpreted in *Gideon*'s Favour; ſo that returning to the Camp, he drew his Men out, and dividing them into three Companies of an hundred Men each, he came upon the Enemy † in the dead Time of the Night. The Watch-Word was, *the Sword of the Lord, and of* Gideon; and, as every Soldier had Directions to do, as their *General* did, they all broke their Pitchers, brandiſh'd their Lamps, and ſounded their Trumpets together.

THE *Midianites*, hearing ſo many Trumpets, and ſeeing ſo many Lights at once, ſuppos'd themſelves to be attack'd by a formidable Army; and ſo riſing in a Fright, and miſtaking their Friends for their Enemies, † they fell upon one another, until they had put every Thing into the utmoſt Confuſion. By this Means, *Gideon*, having obtain'd an eaſy Victory, ſent to the reſt of the Army, who, upon his *Proclamation*, had withdrawn themſelves, ſome to purſue the routed Enemy, and others to ſecure the Paſſes of the River *Jordan*, in order to prevent their Retreat.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

THE Paſſes however could not be all ſecur'd: So that, ſome of the Enemies Troops having made a Shift to croſs the River, *Gideon*, with his three hundred Men, preſs'd hard after them, while the other Part of the Army deſtroy'd thoſe, who ſtaid behind; and, having taken the two *Midianitiſh* Princes, † *Oreb*, and *Zeeb*, they cut off their Heads, and ſent them to *Gideon*.

And puts their Kings, and ſome others, to military Execution.

GIDEON, in the mean Time, and his ſmall Party, were in full Chaſe of two other Princes of *Midian*, *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*; and, when he came to *Succoth* and *Penuel*, two Towns on the other Side of *Jordan*, in the Tribe of *Gad*, he deſir'd of them ſome Proviſion for his Men, becauſe they were faint and weary: But, inſtead of giving him any Refreſhment, they ridiculed the Smallneſs of his Army, for which Inſolence he vow'd to be reveng'd of them upon his Return. Continuing his Purſuit therefore, with his ſmall fatigu'd Party, he came up with the Enemy at *Karcor*, where the two *Midianitiſh* Kings, thinking that they had now ſufficiently eſcap'd, were regardleſs of all Danger: But *Gideon*, falling upon them unexpectedly, ſurpris'd and defeated them, and, having taken them Priſoners, carry'd them in Triumph with him unto *Succoth*, where he executed the Vengeance (which he

† The Expreſſion in the Text is, *in the Beginning of the middle Watch:* For, though the *Romans*, in After-Ages, divided the Night into four *Watches*, Matth. xiv. 25. yet, in the *Eaſtern* Parts, and in more antient Times, it conſiſted but of *three*, whereof the firſt began at *ſix*, and continu'd four Hours. The *ſecond* therefore is call'd the *middle Watch*, and began at *eleven*; ſo that, we may ſuppoſe, that it was ſome Time after this, that *Gideon* alarm'd the *Midianitiſh* Camp; and the Reaſons, why he choſe this Part of the Night to do it in, are obvious, becauſe the Trumpets would then ſeem to ſound louder, and the Lights to ſhine brighter, and ſo both increaſe the Conſternation of the Enemy, and conceal the Smallneſs of his own Army. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† There might be ſeveral Reaſons for their doing this: ——— Either becauſe the Night was ſo dark, that they could not diſtinguiſh Friends from Foes; or becauſe the Thing was ſo ſudden, that it ſtruck them with Horror and Amazement; or becauſe they ſuſpected Treachery, (as they might eaſily do, ſince the Army conſiſted of ſeveral Nations, *Judg.* vi. 3.) or becauſe God had *infatuated* them, as he had many others on the like Occaſion. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† As the Language of the *Iſhmaelites*, the *Midianites*, and the *Amalekites*, who dwelt in *Arabia*, was originally the ſame, becauſe they all deſcended from *Abraham*, their common Father; ſo we may infer, that there was little or no Difference in them at this Time. *Oreb*, in the *Hebrew*, ſignifies a *Crow*, and *Zeeb*, a *Wolf*; and theſe are no improper Words, to repreſent the *Sagaciouſneſs*, and *Fierceneſs*, which ſhould be in two ſuch great Commanders. Nor was it an uncommon Thing for great Families, in ancient Times, to derive their Names from ſuch like Creatures, (hence the *Corvini*, *Gracchi*, *Aquilini*, &c. among the *Romans*) either as *Omens*, or *Monuments* of their undaunted Courage, and Dexterity in *military* Atchievements. But, after all, it ſeems every whit as probable, that theſe were only *Nicknames*, which the *Iſraelites* gave theſe two Princes of *Midian*, to denote their Fierceneſs, and Rapaciouſneſs of Prey. *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 3. and *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

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he had threaten'd) by cruſhing the Princes of that Place to Death under *Thorns* and *Briars*, killing the People of *Penuel*, and demoliſhing its Fortifications. *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, in their March, had laid all the Country waſte, and put many to the Sword, otherwiſe *Gideon* was inclinable to have ſhewn them ſome Mercy: But underſtanding, by their own Confeſſion, that they had ſlain his Brethren at *Tabor*, he order'd his Son *Jether* to fall upon them; but, as he was but a Youth, and ſeem'd a little timorous, † he himſelf diſpatch'd them with his own Hand, having firſt order'd them to be ſtripp'd of their royal Ornaments, and their Camels of their rich Trappings, and Furniture.

THESE great and glorious Actions, in Defence of his Country's Liberty, rais'd *Gideon*'s Name to ſuch a Height, that the People came, and voluntarily offer'd to ſettle the Government upon him and his Family; which he modeſtly and generouſly rejecting, and deſiring only (as an Acknowledgment of his Services) to have the *Pendants*, or Ear-Rings, taken in the Plunder of the *Midianites* given him; the People readily conſented, and, over and above theſe, threw in the coſtly Ornaments, and the Robes of the Kings, together with the golden † Chains, which were about the Camels Necks. The whole amounted to a prodigious Value; and of theſe rich Materials he made an *Ephod*, and plac'd it in the City of *Ophrah*, as a Monument only of his Victory, tho', in After-Times, it came to be perverted to a bad Uſe, gave Occaſion to a freſh *Apoſtacy*, and prov'd the Ruin of *Gideon*'s Family.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

GIDEON, while he liv'd, had ſeveral Wives, by whom (in all) he had ſeventy Sons, beſides one by a Concubine, † whom ſhe nam'd *Abimelech*. As ſoon as his Father was dead, this *Abimelech*, who was a bold aſpiring Youth, tamper'd with the People of *Shechem*, the Place of his Nativity, and where his Mother's Family had no ſmall Intereſt, to make him their King. They, by his Perſuaſions, were inclinable to do it: And (that he might not want Money to carry on his Deſign) furniſh'd him with ſome out of the Treaſury of † their God *Baal-berith*, wherewith he hir'd a Company of profligate Fellows to attend him. With theſe

Abimelech *uſurps the Government of* Shechem.

† In antient Times, it was as much a Cuſtom, for *great Men* to do *Execution* upon Offenders, as it is now an uſual Thing, for them to pronounce *Sentence* upon them. They had not then (as we have now) ſuch Perſons, as the *Romans* call'd *Carnifices*, or publick *Executioners*; and therefore *Saul* bad ſuch as waited on him kill the Prieſts; and *Doeg*, one of his chief Officers, did it, 1 Sam. xxii. 17, 18. But the Reaſon why *Gideon* would have had his Son do this Execution, was, that he might be early animated againſt the Enemies of *Iſrael*, even as *Hannibal* is reported, when he was a Boy, to have been incens'd againſt the *Romans*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The Word, which we render *Chains*, is in the Original, *little Moons*, which the *Midianites* might wear ſtrung together about their Camels Necks, either by Way of *Ornament*, or *Superſtition*, becauſe they, as well as all other People of *Arabia*, were very zealous Worſhippers of the *Moon*. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† What the Names of his other Sons were, we have no Mention made in ſacred Writ; but the Name of this one is particularly ſet down, becauſe the following Story depends upon it: And not only ſo, but his Mother perhaps might give him this Name (which ſignifies, *my Father a King*) out of Pride and Arrogance, that ſhe might be look'd upon as the Wife of *one*, who was thought to deſerve a Kingdom, though he did not accept it: And it is not improbable, that the very Senſe of this might be one Means to inflame the Mind of her Son afterwards, to affect the *Royal* Dignity. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The learned *Bochart* is of Opinion, that the *Baal* here mention'd was the ſame with *Beroë*, the Daughter of *Venus* and *Adonis*, deſir'd in Marriage by *Neptune*, but given to *Bacchus*; and that ſhe gave her Name to *Berith* in *Phœnicia*, where ſhe was much worſhipp'd, and thence tranſlated a Goddeſs into other Parts. But, tho' the Word *Baal* (as he maintains) be frequently us'd in a *feminine* Senſe, yet it can hardly be imagin'd, but that the *ſacred* Hiſtorian, if he had been minded to expreſs a *Goddeſs*, might have found out ſome Way of diſtinguiſhing her; might have call'd her (for Inſtance) *Babalah-Berith*, the *Lady*, or *Goddeſs* of *Berith*, without making Both the Words of a *maſculine* Termination. And therefore the moſt ſimple and natural Manner of explaining the Name, is, to take it in general for the God, who preſides over Covenants and Contracts, to whom it belongs to maintain them, and to puniſh all thoſe that violate them. For it is to be obſerv'd, that the moſt *barbarous*, as well as the moſt *knowing*, the moſt *religious*, as well as the moſt *ſuperſtitious* Nations have always look'd upon God as the Witneſs, as well as the Vindicator of Oaths and Covenants; that the *Greeks* had their *Zeus Horkios*, as well as the *Latins* their *Jupiter Piſtius*, or *Deus Fidius*, or *Fœcialis*, whom they look'd upon as a God of Honeſty and Uprightneſs, always ſuperintending in

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he repair'd to his Father's Houſe at *Ophrah*, and, having ſeiz'd all his Brethren (except *Jotham*, the youngeſt, who made his Eſcape) he ſlew them all † upon *one Stone*, and when he return'd to *Shechem*, inſtead of meeting with Deteſtation for this unnatural Murther, was, in a general Aſſembly of the People, elected their King.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

Jotham's *Parable to the* Shechemites.

When young *Jotham* heard of this, he went upon Mount *Gerizim*, which overlooks the City of *Shechem*, and from thence, *in a parabolical* Speech, repreſented to † the People his Father's Modeſty and Self-denial, in refuſing to have the Government ſettled on him and his Family, which they had now conferr'd on *one*, as much inferior in Virtue and Honour to *Gideon*, and his lawful Sons, as the Bramble is to the Olive-Tree, the Fig-Tree, or the Vine: And then expoſtulating the Injury done his Family, and upbraiding them with their Ingratitude, he appeals to their Conſciences, whether they had done right or not, and denounces a Curſe againſt them for their ſiding with *Abimelech* in all his wicked Deeds.

Their Revolt from Abimelech.

Having thus deliver'd himſelf to the *Shechemites*, *Jotham* made his † Eſcape to *Beer*, where he liv'd ſecure from *Abimelech*'s Rage; and it was not long before his

Treaties and Alliances. And for this Reaſon not improbably, the Houſe of their God *Berith* was the Citadel, the Arſenal, and the Treaſury of the *Shechemites*, even as *Plutarch* informs us, that in the Temple of *Saturn*, the *Romans* repoſited both their Archives and publick Wealth. *Bochart*, Canaan, lib. ii. c. 17. *Pool*'s Annot. in Loc. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Baal-berith*, and Jurieu, Hiſtoire des Dogmes & Cultes, &c. Part IV. Chap. i.

† This Stone ſome will have to be an *Altar*, which *Abimelech* dedicated to the Idol *Berith*, and erected in the ſame Place, where his Father *Gideon* had deſtroy'd his Altar before; and ſo they account, that this Slaughter of his Sons was deſign'd for an *expiatory* Sacrifice of their Father's Crime in demoliſhing the Altar and Grove dedicated to that *Idol*. But this is a little too far-fetch'd, though there is hardly any other Reaſon to be given, why they ſhould all be murder'd upon one and the ſame *Stone*. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

† This is the firſt *Fable*, that we find any where upon Record; and from hence it appears, that ſuch Fictions as theſe, wherein the moſt ſerious Truths are repreſented, were in Uſe among the *Jews* (as they are ſtill in the *Eaſtern* Countries) long before the Time of *Æſop*, or any other Author that we know of. Various are the Reaſons that may be aſſign'd for the firſt Invention of them; but theſe two ſeem to be the principal; 1. Becauſe Men would ſuffer themſelves to be reprehended in this Guiſe, when they would not endure plain Words: And 2dly, Becauſe they heard them with Delight and Pleaſure, and remember'd them better than any grave or rational Diſcourſes.

The Trees went forth on a Time, to anoint a King over them, (So that Anointing was in Uſe two hundred Years before the firſt Kings of *Iſrael*) *and they ſaid unto the Olive-Tree, Reign over us. But the Olive-Tree ſaid unto them, Should I leave my Fatneſs, wherewith by me they Honour God and Man*, (becauſe Oil was offer'd in Sacrifice to God, and fed the Lamps of his Houſe, beſides all the other Uſes, wherein it was ſerviceable to Man) *and go to be promoted over the Trees? And the Trees ſaid to the Fig-Tree, Come thou, and Reign over us. But the Fig-Tree ſaid unto them, Should I forſake my Sweetneſs, and my good Fruit*, (an apt Repreſentation of that Content, and Fulneſs of Pleaſure, which may be enjoy'd in a private Life, and cannot, without Folly, be exchang'd for the Troubles and Cares, that Men meet with in the Managery of publick Affairs) *and go to be promoted over the Trees? Then ſaid the Trees unto the Vine, Come thou, and Reign over us. And the Vine ſaid unto them, Should I leave my Vine, which cheereth God and Man*, (a Form of Speech, imitated by *Heathen* Authors, eſpecially by *Virgil*, (Georg. lib. ii.) where, ſpeaking of ſome generous Wine, he terms it———*Menſis, & Diis accepta ſecundis*, ſince Wine, as well as Oil, was us'd both in *Jewiſh* and *Heathen* Sacrifices) *and go to be promoted over the Trees? Then ſaid all the Trees unto the Bramble*, (the meaneſt of all Trees, good for nothing but to be burnt, and therefore fitly repreſenting *Abimelech*, from whom the *Shechemites* could expect no Manner of Benefit, but a great deal of Trouble and Vexation) *Come thou, and Reign over us. And the Bramble ſaid unto the Trees, If, in Truth, ye anoint me King, then come and put your Truſt in my Shadow*; (an apt Emblem of *Abimelech*'s ridiculous Vanity, to imagine, that he ſhould be able to maintain the Authority of a King, any more, than the Bramble could afford a Shadow or Shelter) *and if not, let Fire come out of the Bramble, and devour the Cedars of* Lebanon. (Words that carry a lively Image of *Abimelech*'s oſtentatious Spirit, and Menaces to take ſevere Vengeance on the *Nobles* of *Shechem*, ſuch as the Houſe of *Millo*, who had been chiefly inſtrumental in his Promotion, in Caſe they ſhould deſert him.) This is the *Parable*; and in ſome Meaſure, its Interpretation: The only Difficulty is, to know, whom theſe Trees are ſet to ſignify. And here, ſome have thought, that, by the *Olive-Tree*, we are to underſtand *Othniel*; by the *Fig-Tree*, *Deborah*; and by the *Vine*, *Gideon*; for, to the two former, they ſuppoſe, that the Offer of the Kingdom was made for the Services done their Country, and by them rejected, as well as by the laſt. But for this there is no Authority; neither is there any Neceſſity, in the Explication of ſuch *Fables*, to aſſign a particular Reaſon for every Image, that is drawn in them. It is ſufficient, if we can but hit of their main Intendment, which, in this of *Jotham*, was to convince the *Shechemites* of their Folly in chuſing a Man for their King, who was no more able to protect them, than a Bramble was to cover other Trees, that ſhould reſort to it, under the Shadow of its Branches. *Saurin*'s Diſſertations, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† This was a City, that ſtood on the *Northern* Frontiers of the Tribe of *Judah*, which did not acknowledge *Abimelech* for King, and therefore *Jotham* knew, that he might have ſure Refuge and Protection there.

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his Curſe began to operate. For the People of *Shechem*, * growing jealous and diſtruſtful of their new King, were for apprehending and killing him, which made him leave the Place, and eſcape for his Life. As ſoon as he was gone, they ſet up another vile Wretch, *Gael*, the Son of *Ebed*, to be their Governor. Under his Protection, the People ventur'd out to reap the Fruits of the Earth, and having, upon this Occaſion, made themſelves merry, they expreſs'd their Deteſtation of *Abimelech*, and none was more forward than *Gael* to ſpeak contemptibly of him, and to make his Boaſts what he would do with him, if he could but once catch him. *Zebul*, whom *Abimelech* intruſted with his Concerns in his Abſence, gave him Intelligence of all that paſs'd, and adviſ'd him to come with ſome Forces, before it was too late. Accordingly, he marches all Night, divides his Army into four Parts, and, early in the Morning, had beſet the City. *Gael*, tho' a very *Coward*, ſeeing Matters reduc'd to this Extremity, march'd out with what Forces he had, but was ſoon defeated, and ſlain. *Abimelech*, next Day, ſtorm'd the Place, and kill'd all the Inhabitants that came in his Way; but ſome having betaken themſelves to a *Fort* belonging to the Temple of their God *Berith*, he ſet Fire to it, and deſtroy'd them all together.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

DURING theſe Times of Confuſion, the Town of *Thebez*, not far diſtant from *Shechem*, revolted; and *Abimelech*, being now fluſh'd with Victory, beſieg'd and took it; but the Inhabitants flying to a ſtrong Tower, he endeavour'd to burn that, as he had done the other, but not with the ſame Succeſs. For, while he was encouraging his Men, and helping them to ſet the Gate on Fire, * a Woman threw down a Piece of Millſtone upon him, which fractur'd his Scull; ſo that finding himſelf mortally wounded, he call'd to his *Armour-Bearer* to put an End to his Life, that it might not be ſaid, he died by the Hand of a Woman. Thus God, in his abundant Righteouſneſs, puniſh'd both *Abimelech*, and the Men of *Shechem* according to their Deſerts; and, within the Space of three Years after their Crimes were committed, made them the Inſtruments of each other's Deſtruction.

Who is kill'd by a Woman at Thebez, *by the Fall of a large Stone.*

AFTER the Death of *Abimelech*, *Tolah*, the Son of *Puah*, an eminent Man of the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, undertook the Government, and continu'd it for three and twenty Years. He dwelt on Mount *Ephraim*, near the Center of the Country, that the People might, with more Conveniency,

Puah *and* Jair *made Judges: Under the latter, the People apoſtatize, and are oppreſs'd.*

* In the Text the Expreſſion is, *Then God ſent an evil Spirit, or Spirit of Diſcord, between* Abimelech *and the Men of Shechem*, Judg. ix. 23. which, in Scripture, is an uſual Form of Speech, and denotes not any *poſitive* Action, but a Permiſſion only, or, at moſt, a Direction from God. It is obſerv'd however, that this Manner of Expreſſion may poſſibly have given Riſe to ſome Notions in the Theology of the *Heathens*, when they ſuppoſe, that the *Furies* are appointed by the Gods to ſow the Seeds of Diſcord among Men.

Luctificam Alecto, dirarum ab Sede Sororum,
Infernique ciet Tenebris; cui triſtia Bella,
Iræque, Incidiæque, & Crimina noxia Cordi.

And a little lower,

Diſjice compoſitam Pacem, ſere Crimina Belli:
Arma velit, poſcatque ſimul, rapiatque Juventus. *Virg. Æn.* vii.

* Thus *Plutarch* relates, that *Pyrrhus*, at the Siege of *Thebes*, was kill'd by a Woman's throwing a *Tile* upon his Head; but there is ſomething more remarkable in *Abimelech*'s Death by a Stone, becauſe, as he ſlew all his Brethren upon *one Stone*, for him to die by no other Inſtrument carry'd ſome Stamp of his Sin upon it. The Manner of his Death however, puts me in mind of what the ſame Author records of the *Spartan* General, *Lyſander*, who fell ingloriouſly under the Walls of *Haliartus*. "Thus he died, ſays he, but not like *Cleombrotus*, who was ſlain, while he "was glorioufly making Head againſt an impetuous Enemy at *Leuctra*, not like *Cyrus*, or *Epaminondas*, who receiv'd "a mortal Wound, while he was rallying his Men, and ſecuring to them the Victory. Theſe great Men died in "their Callings. They died the Death of Kings and Commanders: Whereas he, like ſome common Soldier, or "one of the forlorn Hope, caſt away his Life ingloriouſly; giving this Teſtimony to the ancient *Spartans*, that they "did well to avoid ſtorming of Walls; in which the ſtouteſt Man may chance to fall by the Hand, not only of an "abject Fellow, but by that of a Boy, or a Woman, as they ſay *Achilles* was ſlain, in the Gates of *Troy*, by the "Hands of the effeminate *Paris*." *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Plutarch*'s Comp. of *Lyſander*, and *Sylla*.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

veniency, reſort to him for Judgment; and, tho' there is not much recorded of him, yet he ſeems to have been a prudent and peaceable Man; rais'd up to reform Abuſes, to put down Idolatry, to appeaſe Tumults, and heal the Wounds, which were given to *Church* and *State*, during *Abimelech*'s Uſurpation.

He was ſucceeded by *Jair*, a *Gileadite*, of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, the firſt Governor that was rais'd up out of any of the Tribes beyond *Jordan*, and who, in the main, ſeems to have been more ſollicitous to † *aggrandize* his own Family, than to mind the Concerns of Religion. For, during his Adminiſtration, the People not only worſhipp'd *Baalim*, and *Aſhtaroth*, as they had frequently done before, but adopted the Gods likewiſe of every neighbouring Nation, of the *Syrians*, the *Zidonians*, the *Ammonites*, the *Moabites*, and the *Philiſtines*; ſo that God, being incens'd againſt them, incited the *Philiſtines*, and the *Ammonites* to invade them on all Quarters in one and the ſame Year. Nor did theſe People make their Incurſions only upon the Tribes, that were on the *Eaſt* Side of *Jordan*; but, paſſing the River, gave the Tribes of *Judah*, *Benjamin*, and *Ephraim*, no ſmall Moleſtation, and, by their ſundry Defeats, made them feel the Weight of their Power.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

The *Iſraelites*, finding themſelves not able to cope with ſuch powerful Enemies, grew ſenſible of their Folly; and, to recover the Protection of God, renounc'd all their *Idols*, and betook themſelves to his Service in good earneſt; Whereupon, † his Mercy returning with their Repentance, he ſoon found out Means to effect their Deliverance.

Jephthah *delivers them, and vanquiſhes the* Ammonites.

There was, at that Time, in the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, which ſettled on the *Eaſt* Side of *Jordan*, a Man of Note among his People, whoſe Name was *Gilead*, of the Family of that *Gilead*, the Son of *Machar*, to whom *Moſes* gave the *(d)* City of *Gilead*, from whence the Family took their Name. This Man had by his Wife ſeveral Sons, and one † by a Concubine, whom he nam'd *Jephthah*; but when his Sons grew up, and their Father

† The Reaſons, which the Scripture gives us to think, that he really did aggrandize his own Family, are, 1ſt, Becauſe he is ſaid to have had thirty Sons, that rode on *thirty Aſſes Colts:* For, as in thoſe Days, the *Iſraelites* had but few Chariots, and were not allow'd to keep many Horſes, the moſt honourable of them were us'd to be mounted on theſe Creatures, which, in the *Eaſtern* Countries, were much higher, and more beautiful, than they are with us. 2dly, *They had thirty Cities, or Villages, called after their own Name, in the Land of* Gilead: For, as we read that *Jair*, the Son of *Manaſſeh*, went and took the ſmall Towns of *Gilead*, and call'd them *Havoth-jair*, (Numb. xxxii. 41. and Deut. iii. 14.) ſo we may preſume, that this *Jair*, who was afterwards Judge of *Iſrael*, recover'd the Places, which his Anceſtor conquer'd, and perhaps added ſome more to them, that each Son of his might have one. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† This is the moſt remarkable Repentance and Reformation that we meet with in the Hiſtory of the *Judges*; and it ſeems to be ſo ſerious, that, in the Times of thoſe three Governors, who ſucceeded *Jephthah*, we read nothing of their relapſing into Idolatry. And, as their Repentance was ſincere, ſo the Expreſſion of the Divine Compaſſion towards them, *viz. that his Soul was grieved for the Miſery of* Iſrael, *Judg.* x. 16. is the ſtrongeſt that we meet with; though every one knows, that the Divine Nature is not capable of *Grief*, properly ſo called, but the Meaning is, that he quite alter'd his former Intention, and, in much Mercy, reſolv'd, upon their Repentance, to deliver them.

(d) Numb. xxxii. 29.

† Several *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that the Word *Zonah* may ſignify, either one of another Tribe, or one of another Nation; and ſo, *Joſephus* calls *Jephthah*, ξένον πατὴρ τὴν μητέρα, *a Stranger by the Mother's Side.* It is to be obſerv'd however, that among the *Jews*, if ſuch Perſons as were deem'd Strangers embrac'd the *Law*, their Children were capable to inherit, among the reſt of their Brethren. *Jephthah* indeed, complains of the hard Uſage he met with, but it was upon this Occaſion, when his Country he found ſtood in need of him; for had he been unjuſtly diſpoſſeſs'd of his Right of Inheritance before, we can hardly ſuppoſe, that a Man of his Courage and martial Spirit would have ſat down contented with his Excluſion. It is not to be doubted therefore, but that he *was the Son of an Harlot*, properly ſo call'd: But then the Queſtion is, Why God ſhou'd make Choice of a Perſon of his Character for ſo great an Inſtrument of his Glory? To which it may be reply'd, 1ſt, That God has preſcrib'd Laws to Men, but none to himſelf; and can therefore alter his Diſpenſations as he pleaſes, according to the Circumſtances and Exigences of Things. 2dly, That as he chuſes to act by *ſecond* Cauſes, he always makes uſe of ſuch Inſtruments, as (all Things conſider'd) are propereſt for his Purpoſe, without Regard to any Blemiſhes, for which they themſelves are not accountable: And 3dly, That he might purpoſely diſpenſe with the Law in this Caſe, to ſhew, that thoſe, who are *baſely born* ought not to deſpond, but, by a virtuous and good Life, expect a Share of God's Bleſſings. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, Lib. iv. in the Notes.

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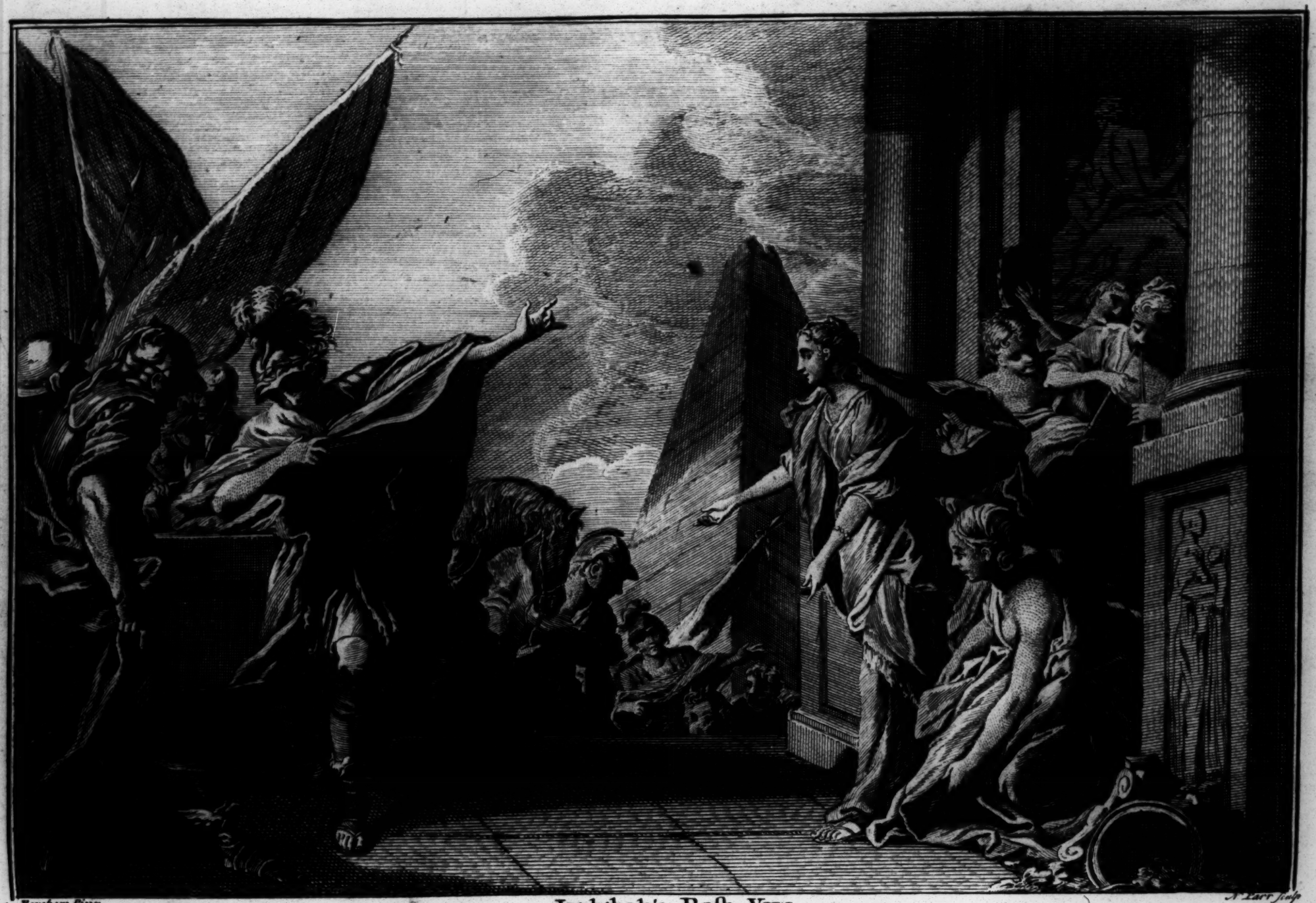

Pl. 56 *Bouchere Pinxt.* **Jephthah's Rash Vow.** *N. Parr Sculp.*

And behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels & with dances. And it came to pass when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, & said, Alas, my daughter.

Judges 11 Chap. 34 Ver.

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Father was dead, they expell'd *Jephthah*, as having no Right of Inheritance with them, ſo that he was ſent to ſeek his Fortune, and, at length, ſettled in the † Land of *Tob*; where, being a Man of great Courage and Bravery, he was ſoon made the *Captain* of a ſmall Army, with whom he us'd to make Excurſions into the Enemies Country, and ſometimes bring off rich Spoils.

THE *Ammonites* had now rais'd a large Army, with a Deſign to invade the Country of *Gilead*, and, as it is ſuppos'd, to lay a Siege to *Gilead* itſelf. The *Gileadites*, on the other Hand, were reſolv'd to defend their Country, and, to that Purpoſe, had got together what Forces they could; but then they were at a Loſs for a *General*. *Jephthah*, they knew, was a Man of Courage and Conduct, who had ſignaliz'd himſelf on frequent Occaſions againſt the Enemy; and therefore, in a full Aſſembly of their *Chiefs*, it was reſolv'd to ſend him an Offer of the Command of their Army. Surpriz'd at this ſudden Change, and remonſtrating a little their former Unkindneſs to him, he conſented at laſt to accept of the Command; but it was on this Condition, that, if he happen'd to be ſucceſsful in the War, they ſhould eſtabliſh him their Governor for Life, which they readily conſented to, and ſolemnly ratify'd. Being inveſted with this Power and Authority *Jephthah* ſent Ambaſſadors to the King of *Ammon*, to demand the Reaſon of his invading the *Gileadites*; to whom that Prince reply'd, that their Land was *his*, and that the *Iſraelites*, in their Paſſage from *Egypt*, had taken it from his Anceſtors, which he now intended to recover. *Jephthah* return'd him, by other Ambaſſadors, in Anſwer, that, if either *Conqueſt* or *Preſcription* conferr'd a Title, they had a juſt Right to the Country they poſſeſs'd, ſince they took it, not from them, but from the *Ammorites*, and had, for *three hundred Years*, been in quiet Poſſeſſion of it; but all would not do. The *Ammonites* were reſolv'd upon a War, and *Jephthah* made all Things ready to receive them: But, before he took the Field, he * made a Vow, that, if he return'd with Victory, the firſt Thing that came out of his Houſe to meet him, he would certainly offer unto the Lord, which many think was the Occaſion of the ſacrificing his own Daughter.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

HOWEVER this be, 'tis certain, that when he return'd out of the Country of *Ammon*, where his Battles were fought with Succeſs, he met with ſome Diſturbance at Home; for the Tribe of *Ephraim*, not long after, paſs'd the River *Jordan*, on purpoſe to pick a Quarrel with him, becauſe, (as they pretended) he had not ſent for them to join the Army, and ſhare in the Victory. † At other Times they had been noiſy and clamorous enough, but now they proceeded ſo far as to threaten to burn his Houſe over his Head. *Jephthah* endeavour'd what he could, to pacify them with good Words; but, when he found that Reaſoning would not do, he fell upon them with his Army, and put them to Flight: And, being reſolv'd to hinder them from giving him the like Moleſtation any more, he ſent, and ſecur'd all the Paſſes over *Jordan* in their Way home; ſo that, as faſt as they came thither, if upon Examination they own'd themſelves

And ſuppreſſes the Inſurrection of the Ephraimites.

† We read no where elſe of this Country, which, very probably, was not far from *Gilead*, upon the Borders of the *Ammonites*, in the Entrance of *Arabia Deſerta*; or perhaps it is the ſame with what is called *Iſh-tob* (2 Sam. viii. 6, 8.) which was in *Syria*, and ſo near the *Ammonites*, that they hir'd Forces from thence, as well as from other Nations, to fight againſt *David*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* To make a Vow, was an Act of religious Worſhip, and in itſelf no way culpable; nay, not only the *Jews*, but other Nations look'd upon it in this View: And therefore we find *Livy* ſo frequently telling us, that the *Roman* Generals were wont to Vow to *Jupiter*, or *Apollo*, or ſome other God, that if, by their Help, they ſhould prove ſucceſsful, they would devote ſome Part of the Spoil, they ſhould take in the War, to their Uſe, or build Temples and dedicate them to their Honour. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Tho' *Gideon* had called the *Ephraimites* to aſſiſt in the Purſuit of the *Midianites*, and had given them the Advantage of Plunder, and the Honour of taking *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, two Princes of *Midian*, Priſoners; yet, becauſe they were not called at firſt to the Battle, they took upon them to reprehend him very ſharply, which he, like a prudent Man, took patiently, and pacify'd them with good Words. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, Lib. iv. in the Notes.

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Ephraimites, they were immediately put to the Sword; if they deny'd it, they had † the Teſt-Word SHIBBOLETH given them, which (if they pronounc'd it SIBBOLETH) diſcover'd their Country, and coſt them their Lives; inſomuch, that what in the Field, and what on the Banks of the River, no leſs than † two and forty Thouſand *Ephraimites* were ſlain.

THUS *Jephthah*, having deliver'd his Country from the Attempts both of *foreign* and *domeſtick* Foes, liv'd the Remainder of his Days in Peace, and, after the Adminiſtration of publick Affairs for ſix Years Continuance in all, he died, and was honourably bury'd in his own Country.

HE was ſucceeded by *Ibzan* of *Bethlehem*, who, after he had govern'd ſeven Years, was ſucceeded by *Elon*, of the Tribe of *Zebulun*; and he, after he had rul'd ten Years, by *Abdon*, of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, who rul'd eight. Of theſe *Judges* the ſacred Hiſtory ſays nothing remarkable, only that ſome of them had a numerous Iſſue, which is mention'd to ſhew that the Government, at that Time, was not *Hereditary*. From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

DURING the Adminiſtration of theſe *Judges*, the *Iſraelites* enjoy'd a Peace of three and twenty Years Continuance; but when they relaps'd into their old Impieties, God ſuffer'd the *Philiſtines* to invade and oppreſs them, whereupon, *Samſon*'s valiant Acts began to diſplay themſelves. He was the Son of *Manoah*, † of the Tribe of *Dan*, and of a Mother, whoſe Name we no where find in Scripture. This Woman was a long Time barren, and had no Children; and therefore when an Angel appear'd to her, while ſhe was alone, and gave her Aſſurances, that ſhe would be Mother of a Son, who was to be † a *Nazarite* from his Birth; to drink no Wine or ſtrong Liquor; and † never have his Hair ſhav'd; upon her telling her Huſband theſe glad Tidings, he requeſted of God to vouchſafe him a Sight of the ſame *Samſon's Parentage, Birth, and juvenile Exploits.*

† Nothing is more notorious, than that the People of the ſame Nation, who ſpeak the ſame *Language*, differ very much in their *Pronunciation* of it, in ſeveral Parts of the Country. In *Paleſtine*, the People in *Galilee*, and thoſe that liv'd at *Jeruſalem*, ſpake the ſame Tongue, and yet, in the Time of *Chriſt*, the latter could tell St *Peter*, that his *Speech bewray'd him*, Matth. xxvi. 73. In *Greece* all ſpake *Greek*, and yet the *Ionians*, *Atticks*, *Dorians*, and *Æolians* pronounc'd very differently. And here, tho' the *Gileadites* and *Ephraimites* were all of one Nation, yet the latter, we find, could not pronounce the Letter *Schin*. There were doubtleſs therefore many other Words, which they could not frame their Mouths to ſpeak, as the *Gileadites* did, but this *one* was choſen, becauſe it was fit for their Purpoſe. For, as *Shibboleth* ſignifies *Floods of Water*, the *Gileadites*, when they ſaw any *Ephraimite* appear, might put this Teſt to him, and bid him ſay, *Let me paſs over the Water*. *Le Clerc*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

† This was a terrible Slaughter, for one Tribe to make of another; but the *Ephraimites* ſeem to have deſerv'd it, as a juſt Puniſhment of their Pride and Inſolence; in deſpiſing ſo great a Man as *Jephthah*, who had ſav'd all the People of *Iſrael*, and threatening to deſtroy his Houſe, after ſo glorious a Victory; in reviling their Brethren likewiſe; invading them without a Cauſe, and attempting to drive them out of their Country. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† As the Tribe of *Dan* lay bordering upon the *Philiſtines*, it was moſt expos'd to their Incurſions and Invaſions; and therefore God, out of that Tribe, choſe *Samſon*, to be a Scourge to them, and a Revenger of his People, which is very agreeable to the Prophecy of *Jacob*, when he bleſſed his Sons, a little before his Death. Dan *ſhall be a Serpent by the Way, an Adder by the Path, biting the Heels of the Horſe, ſo that his Rider ſhall fall backward*, Gen. xlix. 17.

† A *Nazarite* was one, who, under the *Levitical* Law, either to attain the Favour, or avert the Judgments, or acknowledge the Mercies of Almighty God, vowed a Vow of particular Purity, and *ſeparated* himſelf (for ſo the Word ſignifies) in an extraordinary Manner, to the Service of God, The Time of this Vow laſted uſually for eight Days, ſometimes for a Month, and, in ſome Caſes, for the Perſon's whole Life. During this Time, the Perſons (for Women, as well as Men, might enter into this Engagement) bound themſelves to abſtain from Wine, and all ſtrong Liquors; not to cut the Hair of their Heads; not to come near a dead Corps, nor aſſiſt at a Funeral: Nay, the Matter was carry'd ſo high, that if any happen'd to die ſuddenly in their Preſence, the whole Ceremony of this *Separation* was to begin a-new. After the Time that their Separation was ended, they were to offer ſuch Sacrifices, as the Law appointed, and then, being abſolv'd from their Vow by the Prieſt, they might drink Wine, and uſe the ſame Freedom, that other People did. *Samſon*'s *Nazaritiſm* (to which he was conſecrated by his Parents) was to laſt the whole Term of his Life; but his frequent Intercourſe with the *Philiſtines*, and the great Havock and Slaughter, that he ſo often made among them, would induce one to think, that he had a particular Diſpenſation exempting him from the Obſervation of ſome of the foregoing Rules. Vid. Numb. vi. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries upon it, and *Calmet*'s Dictionary under the Word.

† Long Hair was eſteem'd very much among the *Jews*; and ſuch Perſons as were made *Nazarites* by their Parents, and conſecrated to God from the Womb, were requir'd to wear their Hair long and uncut, becauſe it was a Token not only of Beauty, but of Majeſty and Veneration. *Howell*'s Hiſtory in the Notes.

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ſame heavenly *Meſſenger*, which accordingly God granted him, and, when *Manoah* intreated the Angel to accept of a ſmall Entertainment, which he choſe rather to have converted into a Sacrifice, *Manoah* made ready a Kid, and Wine for Libations; and, having plac'd them upon an Altar made of Stone, as the Smoak of the Sacrifice began to aſcend, the † Angel mounted up in the Flame, and ſo diſappear'd.

AT the Time appointed the divine Promiſe was accompliſh'd, and the Woman was deliver'd of a Son, whom ſhe nam'd *Samſon*. While he was yet a Youth, the Spirit of God began to appear in him, and to exert itſelf in ſome notable Exploits and Feats of Activity, in what was called † the old Camp of *Dan*, (lying between † *Zorah* and *Eſhtaol*) the Place where he was born. When he came to Man's Eſtate, he fell in Love with the Daughter of a *Philiſtine*, who liv'd at *Timnah*; and tho' his Parents did not ſo well approve of the Match, becauſe ſhe was ſprung from an *idolatrous* Family, yet, ſuch was their Tenderneſs for their Son, that they indulg'd his Paſſion, and went both of them with him to † *Timnah* to treat about the Marriage. As they were on their Journey, and *Samſon* was ſtraggling a little from the Company, all on a ſudden a young Lion came running at him with open Mouth, but he took it, and ſlew it with as much Eaſe, as if it had been a Kid; and, ſome Time after, as he paſs'd that Way, (which was when his Father and Mother went with him to ſolemnize his Nuptials) he turn'd aſide to ſee what was become of the Lion's Carcaſe, and, to his great Surpriſe, found a † Swarm of Bees, and ſome Honey in it, which he took, and gave Part of it to his Parents, but did not tell them from whence he had it.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

His Marriage, ſlaying the Philiſtines, and burning their Corn with Foxes.

IT was cuſtomary in thoſe Days to continue the *nuptial* Entertainment for ſeven Days, and, to do the Bridegroom greater Honour, his Wife's Relations had brought † thirty of their prime Youth to bear him Company, to whom (as the Manner then was)

† Angles Bodies, which the *Platoniſts* called ὀχήματα, or *Vehicles*, are not ſubject to the Laws of *Gravity*, as ours are. After our Saviour's Reſurrection, the Hiſtory of the Goſpel informs us, how immediately, and in an Inſtant, his Body could move from Place to Place; and therefore it is no Wonder, that *Manoah* and his Wife ſhould diſcover the Perſon, that appear'd to them to be an Angel by the Manner of his Aſcenſion. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† This Camp of *Dan* was probably that Place, where the *Danites* made their Encampment, in their Expedition and Enterprize againſt *Laiſh*, Judg. xviii. 11. for it is not at all likely that the *Philiſtines*, who had the *Iſraelites*, at that Time, entirely under their Subjection, ſhould ſuffer them to have any ſtanding Camp. And this, by the Bye, is a good Argument, that the Story of *Micah*, and of the *Danites* Expedition, was tranſacted before *Samſon*'s Time, though the Compilers of the *Bible* have plac'd it after. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

† Both theſe were Towns in the Tribe of *Dan*, whereof *Zorah* lay on the Frontiers of *Judah*; and for this Reaſon *Reboboam*, upon the Revolt of the Ten Tribes, ſeems to have kept this Place, tho' lying in one of theſe Tribes, and to have fortify'd it, for a Barrier-Town, on that Side of the Kingdom of *Judah*; as he did alſo *Aijalon*, another Town belonging to the ſame Tribe. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II. Chap. vi.

† It is not improbably thought, that the Place which is called *Timnah*, Joſh. xv. 10. and *Timnatha*, Joſh. xix. 43. was the ſame with this. It was aſſign'd at firſt to the Tribe of *Judah*, but afterwards to the Tribe of *Dan*, and was, in all Likelihood, the Place whither *Judah*, the Patriarch of the Tribe, that was called after him, went up to his Sheep-ſhearers, *Gen.* xxxviii. 12. *Wells*'s Geography, ibid.

† Bees are obſerv'd by *Ariſtotle* and others to abhor ſtinking Smells, and to abſtain from Fleſh; which has made ſome think it ſtrange, that a Swarm of Bees ſhould be found in the Carcaſe of a Lion: But it is no hard Matter to ſuppoſe, that either Time had conſum'd, or Birds and Beaſts devour'd all the Fleſh, ſo that nothing was left of the Lion but the *Skeleton*, in which the Bees did not breed (for the Notion of Inſects breeding in that Manner is now quite exploded) but only ſettled themſelves, when they *ſwarm'd*, as they have ſometimes done in dead Men's Scull's, and in their Tombs. *Bochart*'s Hieroz. Part II. lib. iv. c. 10. and *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† During the Time of the *Marriage feaſt*, which, for a Virgin, laſted ſeven, but for a Widow, only three Days, it was cuſtomary among the *Jews*, to have a choſen Set of young Men, whom the *Greeks* called *Paranymphs*, and the *Hebrew Scheliachim*, to keep the *Bridegroom* Company; as alſo a certain Number of young Women were about the *Bride* all this Time. Theſe young Men were generally of the Bridegroom's Relations and Acquaintance; but, at *Samſon*'s Marriage, they belong'd to his Wife's Family, (and were ſent, as ſome of the *Jews* think) not ſo much to do him Honour at the Time of his *Nuptials*, as to be a *Guard* over him, leſt he ſhould make any Diſturbance, of which the *Philiſtines* were afraid, when they underſtood that he was a Man of ſo much Strength and Might. *Lamy*'s Introduction, Lib. i. Cap. 14. and *Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur les Marriages des Heb.

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was) he propounded a *Riddle* †, which if they could explain in the Time, that the Feaſt laſted, he oblig'd himſelf to give them thirty Suits of Clothes, and an equal Number of Shirts; but if they could not, they were to forfeit the like to him. The Words of the Riddle were, *Out of the Eater came forth Meat, and out of the Strong came forth Sweetneſs*; which ſo puzzled the young Men, that they could not, for their Hearts, deviſe what it meant, and therefore applying themſelves to *Samſon*'s Wife, what with Threats, and what with Intreaties, they prevail'd with her to get the Secret out of her Huſband: Which when, with much Importunity, ſhe had done, ſhe told it them, and they, at the Concluſion of the Feaſt, gave him to underſtand that they knew it. He told them however by whoſe Information they had it, and, being deſperately enrag'd went down to † *Aſkalon*, a City of the *Philiſtines*, where having ſlain † thirty Men, he gave their Clothes to thoſe that had expounded the Riddle; but, taking the Thing very ill of his Wife, he left her, and went down to his Father's Houſe, while ſhe, in his Abſence, was marry'd to one of the young Men, that had been his Companions all the Wedding-Week.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

As ſoon as his Reſentment was abated, and his Anger appeas'd, *Samſon* took a Kid for a Preſent to his Wife, and went to her Father's Houſe, with a full Purpoſe of being reconcil'd to her; but, to his great Amazement, was deny'd Admittance to her Room, and told by her Father, that, upon Preſumption he had quite forſaken her, he had marry'd her to one of his Companions, but had another Daughter younger, and more beautiful, that was at his Service. This Anſwer was far from ſatisfying him; and therefore, imagining that the Affront was not ſo much the Act of his Father-in-Law, as the general Contrivance of the *Philiſtines*, he turn'd about ſhort, and vow'd Revenge, which he afterwards executed in the following Manner.

By ſome Means or other, he got together a Multitude of *Foxes*, to the Number of three Hundred; and, tying them two and two together by the Tails, with a lighted Torch between each Pair, he turn'd them into the ſtanding Corn at different Places, and ſo not only ſet the Fields on Fire,

† This Riddle, which *Samſon* propos'd at his Nuptials, is ſomewhat ſingular. As the Men and Women were not permitted to be together in theſe *Eaſtern* Countries, they could not amuſe themſelves with their Converſation; and as they could not ſpend their Time merely in dull eating and drinking, it is hence preſum'd that their Cuſtom was, in their Compotations and Feaſts, (as we find afterwards among the *Greeks*) to propoſe Queſtions, and hard Problems to be reſolv'd, in order to exerciſe the Wit and Sagacity of the Company. *Selden* de Uxore Hebr. lib. ii. c. 16. But as to this Riddle of *Samſon*'s, ſome People are apt to find Exceptions. The Oppoſition, they ſay, is manifeſt in the former Part of it, but not in the latter; for *Weakneſs* is oppos'd to *Strength*, not *Sweetneſs*, whoſe Oppoſite is *Bitterneſs*, or *Sharpneſs*. But *Bochart* has ingeniouſly obſerv'd, that theſe two Words, *ſtrong* and *ſharp*, are oftentimes us'd promiſcuouſly. For, in the *Arabick* Language, the Word *Mirra*, which ſignifies *Strength*, comes from *Marra*, which ſignifies to be *ſharp* or *bitter*; and ſo it is in the *Latin*, where *Acer*, a *ſharp Man*, is as much as a valiant Man, one who *eagerly* (as we ſpeak) engages his Enemy, and (what is more) we find in ſome of the beſt Authors, this particular Epithet apply'd to Lions ——— *Genus acre Leonum*, Ovid. Faſt. And therefore the *Antitheſis* of the Words, is this, ——— *Food came from the Devourer, and Sweetneſs from what is eager or ſharp*, i. e. violent and fierce. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† It is a City in the Land of the *Philiſtines* ſituated between *Azoth* and *Gaza*, upon the Coaſt of the *Mediterranean-Sea*, about five hundred and twenty Furlongs diſtant from *Jeruſalem*. It is ſaid to have been of great Note among the *Gentiles*, for a Temple dedicated to *Dirceto*, the Mother of *Semiramis*, here worſhipp'd in the Form of a *Mermaid*; and for another Temple of *Apollo*, where *Herod*, the Father of *Antipater*, and Grandfather of *Herod the Great*, ſerv'd as Prieſt. The Place ſubſiſts to this Day, but is now very inconſiderable. Some Mention there is made of the Wine of *Aſkalon*, and the Cypreſs-Tree, (a Shrub that was antiently in great Eſteem, and very common in this Place) but modern Travellers ſay no ſuch Thing of it now. *Calmet*'s Dictionary under the Word, and *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

† It may well be queſtion'd, upon what Occaſion *Samſon* could meet with thirty *Philiſtines*, all cloth'd in their new and beſt Attire, even though we allow that he went with a Diſpoſition to pick a Quarrel with them, and ſlay them; but then it is but ſuppoſing, that, at this Time, there was a Merry-making, either in the Fields, or in the City, at ſome publick Solemnity, when great Companies us'd to be gather'd together, and appear in their beſt Apparel, and the Thing is done. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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Fire, but the Vine and Olive Yards likewiſe, inſomuch that the whole Country was in a Blaze. When the *Philiſtines* underſtood that it was *Samſon*, who had done this, in Revenge to the Affront, which his Father-in-law had put upon him, they came in a Body, and fir'd the Houſe over his Father's Head, and ſo burnt him and *Samſon*'s Wife together. This was a freſh Provocation, for which *Samſon* threaten'd to be reveng'd; and, thereupon, without any Ceremony, fell immediately upon them, and ‖ ſlew a great Number of them.

SAMSON, being conſcious to himſelf, that he muſt have highly provok'd the *Philiſtines* by this laſt Slaughter of them, took up his Reſidence thence forwards on the † Top of the Rock *Etam*, which was in the Tribe of *Judah*. Hereupon the *Philiſtines* came down with an armed Force, and demanded *Samſon* to be deliver'd up to them. The People of *Judah*, fearing the Conſequence of this Invaſion, detach'd a Body of three Thouſand Men to *Samſon*; who, after they had expoſtulated the Injury he had done them in provoking their Enemies ſo highly, told him in plain Terms, that they were come to ſeize, and deliver him up to the *Philiſtines*.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

His Killing a 1000 *with a Jaw-Bone.*

SAMSON ſubmitted to have himſelf bound (which was done with new ſtrong Cords) upon Condition, that they themſelves would not ſide with the Enemy againſt him; and ſo being brought to the Place, where the *Philiſtines* were encamp'd, they now thought they had him ſecure, and therefore ran out with Joy to receive him. But as they came near him, he ſnapp'd the Cords aſunder, and, happening to eſpy a freſh Jaw-Bone of an Aſs, he made Uſe of that for Want of a better Weapon, and therewith ſlew no leſs than a Thouſand Men; from which Atchievement, the Place was afterwards called, either ſimply *Lehi*, i. e. the *Jaw-Bone*, or *Ramah-Lehi*, the *Lifting up of the Jaw-Bone*. Fatigu'd with this Fight, and being now exceſſive thirſty in a Place, where no Water was to be had, he made his Supplications to God, and God immediately caus'd a Fountain of delicious Water to iſſue from an hollow Rock, adjacent to *Lehi*, wherewith *Samſon* allay'd his Thirſt, and was reviv'd; and from this Event the Place was call'd *En-hakkor*, the *Well of him that pray'd*, ever after.

Carrying away the Gates of Gaza.

AFTER this Action *Samſon* made nothing of the *Philiſtines*, but went openly into † one of their Cities call'd *Gaza*, and

‖ The Words in the Text, according to our Tranſlation, are, *And he ſmote them Hip and Thigh with a great Slaughter*; Judg. xv. 8. But the Words in the Original will admit of this Signification, *He ſmote them with his Leg on their Thigh, and gave them great Hurts or Wounds*; and, to juſtify this Senſe, a learned Commentator ſuppoſes, that there was at this Time, ſomewhere among the *Philiſtines*, Wreſtling Matches, and other rural Exerciſes, to which every one was invited, and that *Samſon* among the reſt, might go thither; that there he threw great Numbers of the *Philiſtines*, who perhaps might value themſelves upon their Activity that Way; and, in the Midſt of the Grapple with them, broke their Thighs with a Kick or Twiſt of his Leg. If this Suppoſition be right, the Phraſe *Crus Femori impingere* ſeems to be much the ſame with what the *Greeks* call σκελίζειν, or ἀποσκελίζειν; for, though this Kind of Exerciſe grew into high Eſteem among the *Grecians*, who were ſo famous for their *Gymnick* Sports; yet, that Wreſtling was an Exerciſe not unknown among the People of the *Eaſt* is manifeſt from Gen. xxv. 26. xxx. 8. and xxxii. 24. This our Commentator offers but as a Conjecture indeed; but it ſeems much more feaſible, than the Interpretation either of the *Vulgate*, or *Chaldee* Paraphraſt. *Le Clerc* in Locum.

† This was a ſtrong Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, (as *Joſephus* relates) to the Top of which no more than one Man could come a-breaſt, and therefore eaſily defenſible: By all this however, and what follows in this Hiſtory of *Samſon*, it is plain, that he had no Commiſſion from God, nor was mov'd by any extraordinary Impulſe to make open War (as did *Gideon*, *Jephthah*, and others) for the Deliverance of *Iſrael* from the Yoke of the *Philiſtines*, but only to weaken them and keep them in Awe, that, out of Dread of him, they might be leſs cruel in their Oppreſſion; and that this was all that God intended to do by him, is pretty plain from the Words of the Angel, Judg. xiii. 5. *He ſhall begin to deliver* Iſrael. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† This City was, by *Joſhua*, made Part of the Tribe of *Judah*, but, after him, it fell into the Hands of the *Philiſtines*, and was one of their five *Principalities*, ſituated between *Raphia* and *Aſkelon*, towards the ſouthern Extremity of the promis'd Land. The advantageous Situation of this Place was the Cauſe of the many Revolutions, to which it became ſubject. At firſt of all it belong'd to the *Philiſtines*, but, in *Joſhua*'s Time, was conquer'd by the *Hebrews*. In the Reigns of *Jotham* and *Ahaz*, it recover'd its Liberty, but was conquer'd by *Hezekiah*. It was made ſubject to the

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and took up his Lodging in a publick Houſe of Entertainment. The Governor of the Place had ſoon Intelligence of him, and ſent Guards to beſet the Houſe, and to watch the Gates of the City for his going out next Morning; but *Samſon*, being inform'd of this, roſe in the Midnight, and taking the two Gates of the City, Gate-Poſts, Bars, Bolts, Chain and all, he laid them on his Shoulders, and carry'd them to the Top of an Hill, † that looks towards *Hebron*, and there left them.

Falling in Love with Dalilah, *by whom he is betray'd, and deliver'd, to the* Philiſtines.

At length a more fatal *Adventure*, than any of theſe, befel him: For, falling in Love with a beautiful Woman nam'd † *Dalilah*, who liv'd in the Vale of *Sorek*, which lay in the Tribe of *Judah*, he was ſo infatuated to her, that he loſt all Regard to his own Safety. The Princes of the *Philiſtines*, obſerving his Paſſion of this Woman, came and promis'd her † a round Sum of Money, if ſhe would learn of him, and diſcover to them, what might be the Cauſe of this his wonderful Strength, and † how he might be depriv'd of it. This ſhe undertook to do; and fail'd not to employ all her Art and Sollicitation, to get the important Secret from him. For ſome Time he amus'd her with Fictions, and made her believe, that his Strength conſiſted ſometimes in one Thing, and ſometimes in another; firſt, that binding him with Bands made of green Withs, then, that tying him with Ropes that had never been us'd, and again, † weaving his

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

the *Chaldeans*, when they reduc'd *Syria* and *Phœnicia*; and afterwards fell into the Hands of the *Perſians*. They were Maſters of it, when *Alexander* beſieg'd, took, and demoliſh'd it. It afterwards roſe again (but not near of the ſame Magnitude) under the Name of *Majuma*, which underwent as many Viciſſitudes as the former. The Kings of *Egypt* had it for ſome Time in Poſſeſſion; *Antiochus the Great* took and ſack'd it; the *Aſmoneans*, or *Maccabees*, took it ſeveral Times from the *Syrians*; *Alexander Jannæus*, King of the *Hebrews*, deſtroy'd it; *Gabinius* repair'd it; *Auguſtus* gave it to *Herod the Great*; *Conſtantine* gave it the Name of *Conſtantia*, with many independent Privileges, in Honour of his Son; but the Emperor *Julian* deſtroy'd, and depriv'd it of all. *Calmet*'s Dictionary.

† The Words in the Text are, that *he carried them up to the Top of a Hill, that is before* Hebron, Judg. xvi. 3. but the Word, which we render *before*, does equally ſignify *in the Sight of* Hebron; and therefore, ſince the Diſtance between *Gaza* and *Hebron* is no leſs than twenty Miles, it is more probable, that the Hill, were *Samſon* left theſe Gates, lay between the two Cities, and in View of both, that the Inhabitants of one City might behold them to their Confuſion, and they of the other to their Encouragement to hope for a future Deliverance. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† It is certain, that *Sorek* was a Place in the Land of *Judæa*, famous for choice Wines, as may be gather'd from Gen. xlvi. 11. Iſaiah v. 12. and Jer. ii. 21. and lay not above a Mile and a half from *Eſcol*, from whence the Spies brought a Bunch of Grapes for a Sample of the Fruitfulneſs of the Country; but whether *Dalilah*, who is ſaid to live here, was a Woman of *Iſrael*, or one of the Daughters of the *Philiſtines*, (who at this Time were Rulers in the Country of *Judah*) or whether ſhe was his Wife, or an Harlot only, is not expreſs'd in her Story. St *Chryſoſtom* and others are of Opinion, that he was marry'd to her; but if ſo, ſome Mention, one would think, there ſhould have been of the Marriage-Ceremonies in this, as well as in his former Wife's Caſe: Nor can we think, that the *Philiſtines* would have been ſo bold, as to attempt to draw her into their Party, and to bribe her to betray him into their Hands, had ſhe been his lawful Wife. It appears indeed, by her whole Behaviour that ſhe was a mercenary Woman, who would do any Thing to get Money, and accordingly *Joſephus* (Antiq. lib. v. c. 1.) calls her a common Proſtitute of the *Philiſtines*. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

† The Princes of the *Philiſtines*, from their five chief Cities, *Accaron*, *Aſcalon*, *Gaza*, *Azoth*, and *Gath*, 1 Sam. vi. 17. are ſuppos'd to be five in Number, ſo that, if they made her a common Purſe, (as we ſay) of five Times eleven hundred Pieces, or five thouſand five hundred Shekels of Silver, it would amount to about three hundred and forty three Pounds fifteen Shillings. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

† There is a good deal of Probability in *Joſephus*'s Manner of telling this Story, *viz.* That while they were eating and drinking together, and he was careſſing her, ſhe fell into an Admiration of his wonderful Deeds; and, having highly extolled them, deſir'd him to tell her, how he came ſo much to excel all other Men in Strength. For we cannot ſuppoſe, that ſhe came bluntly upon him all at once, and deſir'd to know, (as it is in the Text) *wherewith he might be bound and afflicted*. This had been diſcovering her wicked Deſign againſt him at once, and defeating herſelf of an Opportunity of betraying him; and therefore we muſt conclude, that the Sacred Hiſtory in this Place (as it frequently does elſewhere) gives us only the Sum and Subſtance of what *Dalilah* ſaid to her *Paramour*, without taking notice of all the cunning and artful Speeches, wherewith ſhe dreſs'd it up. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† We have follow'd in this Paſſage (which indeed is a very obſcure one) the Notion of the learned *Spencer*, (de Leg. Moſis Rit. lib. iii. c. 6. Diſſert. 1.) concerning the Hair of the *Nazarite*; but a learned Commentator is of another Opinion, *viz.* that *Samſon*'s Hair, being very long, was interwoven with the Threads and Warp of a Web of Cloth. And to this Purpoſe he ſuppoſes, that in the Room where he ſometimes ſlept upon a Couch, there might ſtand very near a Loom, wherewith *Dalilah*, (as the Cuſtom then was) at her leiſure Hours, might work and divert herſelf,

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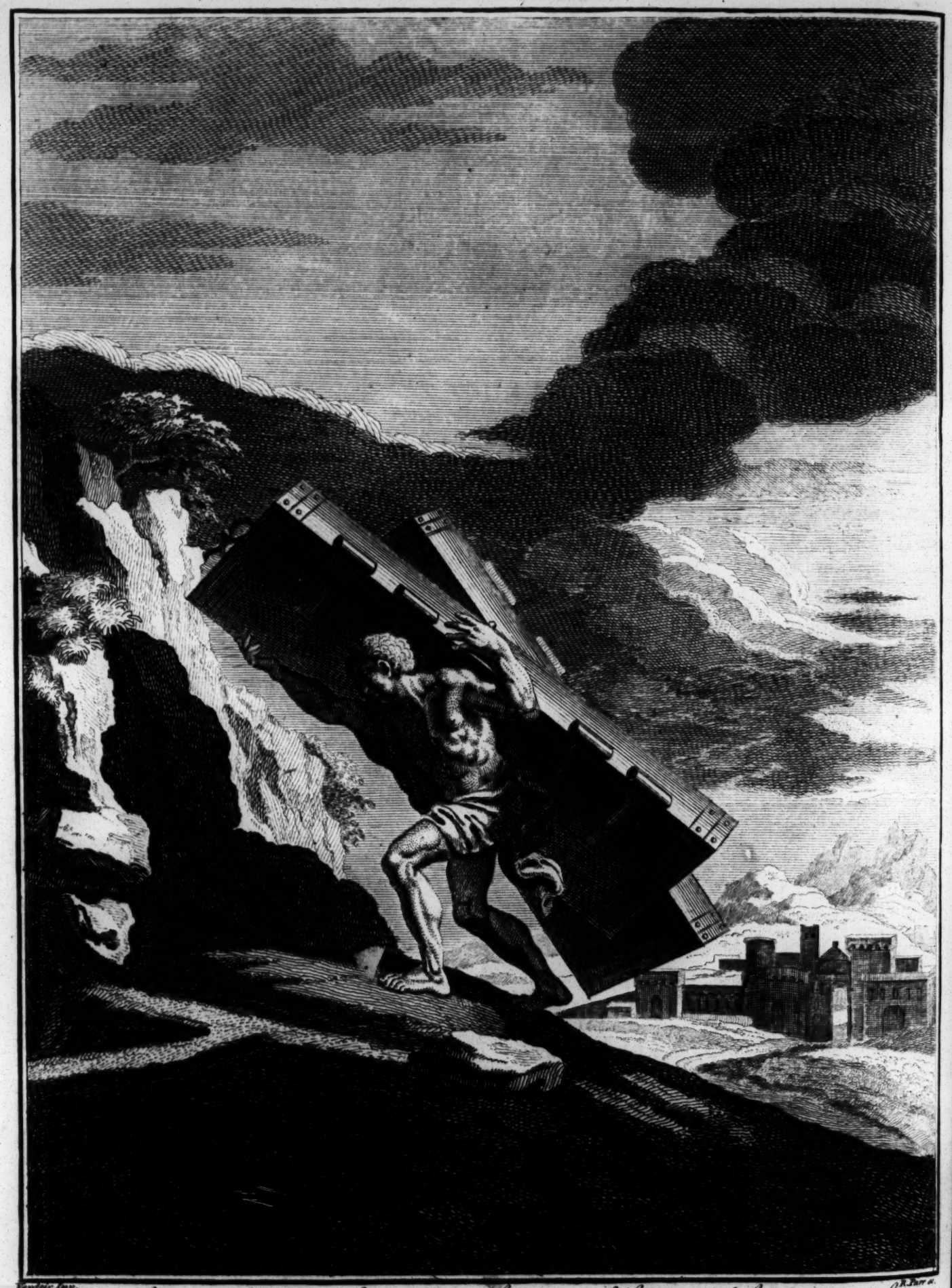

Vendrir Inv.

And Samson arose at midnight, and took the doors of the Gate of the City, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, & carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron. **Judges. Chap. XVI. Verse 3.**

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his Hair into *Treſſes*, and ſo *filleting* them up, would bereave him of his Strength: But theſe were no more than *mock Stories*, for, upon Trial, ſhe found that all this ſignify'd nothing; and therefore, betaking herſelf to all her Arts and Wiles, ſhe complain'd of his Falſeneſs, and upbraided him with his Want of Love, ſince he with-held a Thing from her, which ſhe was ſo impatient to know: And thus, by daily *teazing* and importuning him, ſhe prevail'd with him at length to tell her the Secret, *viz.* that, *in the Preſervation of his Hair (for he was a* Nazarite *from his Birth) his Strength and Security lay.*

THERE was ſomething in his Manner of telling her this, that made *Dalilah*, believe ſhe had now got the true Secret from him; and therefore ſhe ſent Word thereof to ſome of the Chief of the *Philiſtines*, who came and paid her the Money they had covenanted to give her: And, when ſhe had cut off his Hair, as he lay ſleeping in her Lap, they fell upon him, bound him, and put out his Eyes; and, having carry'd him to *Gaza*, they ſhut him up in Priſon, and made him † grind in the *Mill*, like a Slave. From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

IN Proceſs of Time however, his Hair grew again, and with it his former Strength return'd: So that, when ſeveral of the Princes and Nobility of the *Philiſtines* were met in a general Aſſembly, to return Thanks to their God † *Dagon*, for having deliver'd their worſt and foreſt Enemy into their Hands; and after they had feaſted a while, and were now grown merry, they order'd that this ſame *Samſon* ſhould be ſent for, that they might have Pleaſure in ridiculing his Miſery, and making Sport with his Blindneſs, and accordingly *Samſon* was brought. A large Number of People was upon this Occaſion met together; and the Building, where the Feaſt was celebrated, had only two *His laſt Exploit, and Death.*

herſelf, and that now, by his Permiſſion and Connivance, ſhe might take the Locks of his Hair, work it into the Web, and, to hinder it from being pulled out, ſecure it with an Iron Pin thruſt into the Beam, but that *Samſon*, when he awoke, took the Loom along with him at his Hair. And indeed, without ſome ſuch Suſpicion as this, we cannot very well tell what to make of his going away with *the Pin of the Beam, and with the Web*, Judg. xvi. 14. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† Before the Invention of *Wind* and *Water-Mills*, Men made uſe of *Hand-Mills*, wherewith to grind their Corn; and, as this was a very laborious Work, we find Maſters (eſpecially in moſt *Comick* Authors) threaten'd their Servants with it, in caſe of any Delinquency. It was the Work indeed of *Malefactors*, as well as Slaves; and therefore it ſeems very probable, that, in this Priſon, where *Samſon* was put, there was a publick Mill, as *Socrates* (Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib. v. c. 18.) tells us there were ſeveral afterwards in *Rome*, in the Time of *Theodoſius*. So that from this, and ſome other Circumſtances, we may learn, that the *Philiſtines* Purpoſe was, not to put *Samſon* to Death, (even as they had promis'd *Dalilah* they would not) but to puniſh him in a Manner *(viz.* with Blindneſs, hard Labour, and Inſults) much worſe, and more intolerable, than Death itſelf. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† The Word *Dagon*, is taken from the *Phœnician* Root *Dag*, which ſignifies a Fiſh; and accordingly the Idol is uſually repreſented (as the *Heathens* do *Tritons* and *Syrens)* in the Shape of a Woman, with the lower Parts of a Fiſh — *deſinit in Piſcem mulier formoſa ſuperne*. ——— For this Reaſon learned Men have imagin'd, that *Dagon*, was the ſame with *Derceto*, which the People of *Aſkelon* worſhipp'd, and near which Place there was a great Pond full of Fiſh, conſecrated to this Goddeſs, from which the Inhabitants ſuperſtitiouſly abſtain'd, out of a fond Belief that *Venus*, having heretofore caſt herſelf into this Pond, was *metamorphoſed* into a Fiſh. The learned *Jurieu* is of another Opinion, *viz.* That *Dagon* whoſe Termination is Maſculine, both in ſacred and profane Writings, is always repreſented as a *Male Deity*, and may therefore very properly be thought to be the *Neptune* of the Ancients. The *Phœnicians* in particular (from whom both the *Greeks* and *Romans* borrow'd their Gods) living upon the Sea-Coaſt, and by their Navigation and Commerce, gaining great Advantages from that Element, can hardly be ſuppos'd to want a Deity to preſide over it. *Saturn*, and his three Sons, *Jupiter*, *Neptune*, and *Pluto*, were their principal Idols: And, as *Saturn* was their *Moloch*, *Jupiter* their *Baal*, and *Pluto* their *Baal-Zebub*; ſo have we Reaſon to preſume, that *Neptune* was their *Dagon*. This however, will not hinder us from ſuppoſing, that there might be two Deities, a *Male* and a *Female*, worſhipp'd in the ſame Country, and under the ſame Figure or Form; and that, as the *Pagan* Theology gives *Jupiter* a *Juno*, to be his Conſort in Heaven; and *Pluto*, a *Proſerpine* to keep him Company in Hell; ſo *Neptune* had his *Amphitrite* to be the Partner of his liquid Empire in the Sea. According to this Suppoſition, the *Dagon* of *Gaza* or *Aſhdon* muſt be *Neptune*, and the *Dercets* of *Aſkelon*, a few Leagues diſtant, *Amphitrite*, the Daughter of *Doris* and *Oceanus*. Nor can it be thought incongruous to ſuppoſe farther, that the Univerſal God of the Sea might, in one Place, be repreſented as a *Male* (as at *Aſhdod)*; and, in another (as at *Aſkelon)* as a *Female*, to ſignify the Fecundity of that Element, which produces, and nouriſhes ſo many living Creatures. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, *Calmet*'s Dictionary, and *Jurieu*, Hiſtoire des Dogmes & Cultes, Par. IV. Chap. vi.

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two large Pillars to ſupport the Roof. After the *Philiſtines* therefore had inſulted *Samſon*, as long as they thought fit, he deſir'd the Boy, that led him, to guide him to one of thoſe Pillars, that he might reſt himſelf a little againſt it. The Boy did ſo: And *Samſon* by this Means having laid hold of the two main Supporters, the one with his right Hand, and the other with his Left, after a ſhort *Ejaculation* to God for the *Reſtoration* of his former Strength, he gave them ſuch a terrible Shake, that down came the Houſe, and cruſh'd no leſs than three Thouſand Perſons to Death under its Ruins, and *Samſon* among the reſt. From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

† Thus died this *Hero*, in the Midſt of his Enemies, as he deſir'd; and when his Relations heard of his Death, they ſent, and † took away his Body, and bury'd it honourably in the Sepulchre of his Fathers.

The Objection.

" JUDGES, according to the Notion " that one would have of them, ſhould " be Men of great Gravity and Sedateneſs; " not only regular and religious themſelves, " but zealous Promoters of Virtue, and " ſevere Avengers of all Wickedneſs and " Impiety; well ſkill'd in the Knowledge " of the Laws of God, and impartial in " the Adminiſtration of Juſtice: But, " inſtead of this, what do we meet with " in this Hiſtory of their Lives, but Cru- " elty and Perfidiouſneſs, a profane Neg- " lect of the Service of God, Encourage- " ment given to Vice by their own Ex- " amples, and ſuch *Romantick* Accounts " of ſome of their Actions and Adventures, " as no human Faith can ſwallow?

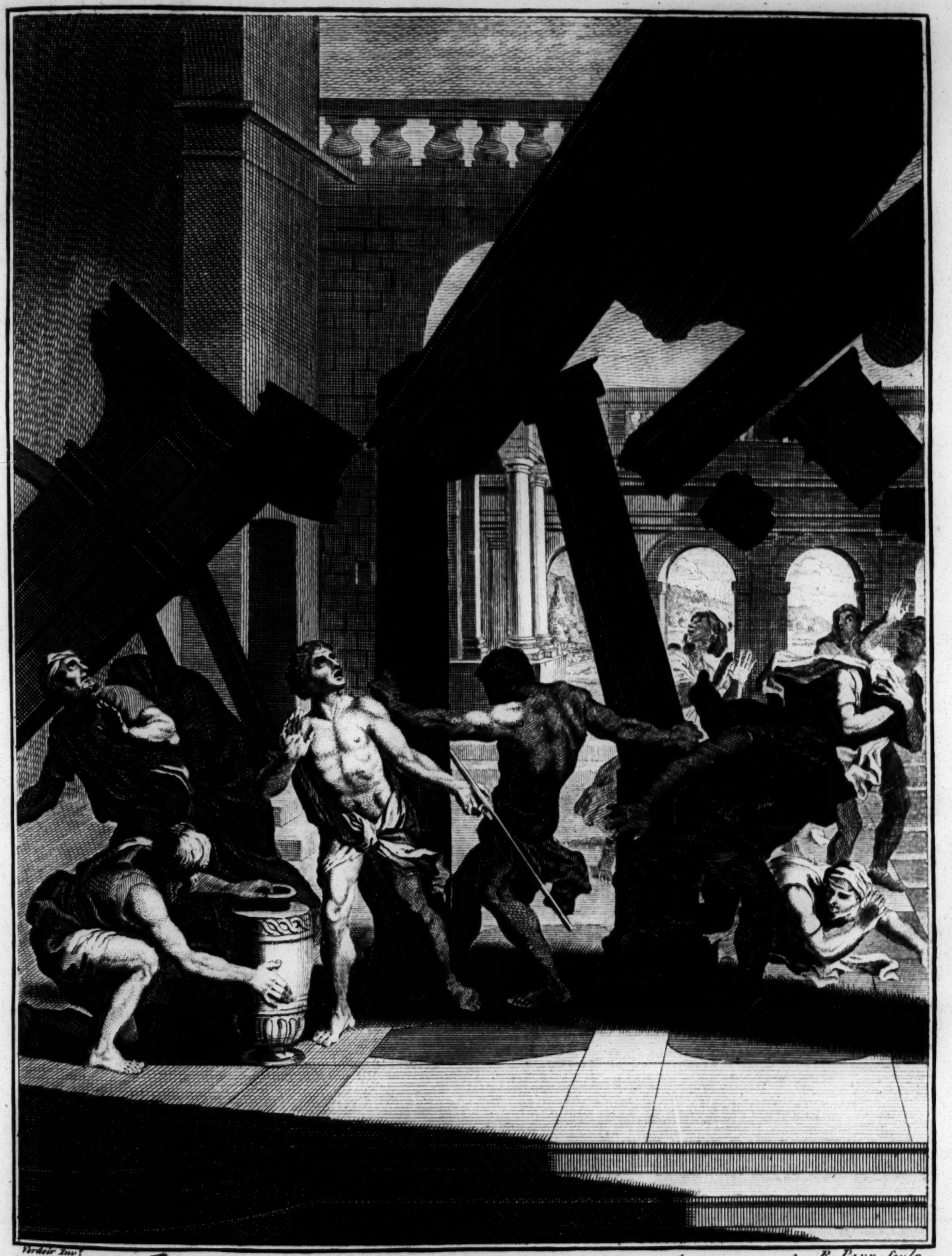
" For what can we think of *Ehud*'s " *left-handed Doings*, in aſſaſſinating *Eg-* " *lon*, King of the *Moabites*, under the " wicked Pretence of having a Meſſage to " deliver to him from God? And yet, it " muſt be own'd, that this was not near " ſo baſe as *Jael*'s inviting *Siſera* (who " was then at Peace with her and her " Huſband) into her Tent, and, in Cir- " cumſtances that would have mov'd " another's Compaſſion, knocking him " on the Head, for which ſhe merited to " have her Name recorded in a *triumphant* " Song.

" The *Faith* of ſeveral of theſe Wor- " thies is highly commended *(e)* by the " Author to the *Hebrews*; and yet we " find *Barak* refuſing to obey the divine " Summons, unleſs *Deborah* would pro- " miſe to go along with him; and *Gideon* " requeſting Miracle upon Miracle for " the

† It is made a Queſtion among *Caſuiſts* and *Divines*, whether *Samſon* ought to have died in this Manner, with a Spirit of Revenge, and Self-murther? St *Auſtin* excuſes him indeed, but it is upon the Suppoſition that he was urg'd thereunto by the inward Motions of him, who is the great Arbiter of our Life and Death; and St *Bernard* affirms, that, if he had not a peculiar Inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt to move him to this, he could not, without Sin, have been the Author of his own Death; but others maintain, that, without having Recourſe to this *ſupernatural* Motive, this Action of his might be vindicated from his Office, as being the *Judge* and *Defender* of *Iſrael*, and that he might therefore devote his Life to the Publick Good (as ſome *Heathens* have merited the Commendation of Poſterity by ſo doing) without having any Thing in View, but the Death of his Enemies, and the Deliverance of his own People. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, and *Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur divers Exploits de *Samſon*.

† How the People of *Gaza* came to permit *Samſon*'s Relations to come and take away his Body is not ſo obvious to conceive. In all Nations there was formerly ſo much Humanity, as not to prohibit Enemies from interring their Dead, nor did any of the *Iſraelites* join with *Samſon* in his Enterprizes; he ſtood alone in what he did: But this laſt Slaughter which he had made among them, might have provok'd them, one would think, to ſome Acts of Outrage even upon his dead Body. It is to be obſerv'd however, that inſtead of any Acts of Violence, they might perhaps be much humbled and mollify'd by this late Diſaſter; and might fear, that if they deny'd him Burial, the God of *Iſrael*, who had given him ſuch extraordinary Strength in his Life-Time, would not fail to take Vengeance of them. And therefore, dreading his very Corps, they were deſirous to get quit of it (even as they were of the *Ark* afterwards) and glad that any came to take ſuch a formidable Object out of their Sight. *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

(e) Heb. xi.



Verdier Invt. R. Parr Sculp.

And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines: and he bowed himself with all his might; & the house fell upon the lords, & upon all the people that were therein: Judges Chap. XVI. Ver. 30

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" the Confirmation of his Faith, tho' he " had *Demonſtration* enough that the " Meſſenger came from God.

" No Man had certainly experienc'd " more ſignal Interpoſitions of God's " Goodneſs in his Favour, than this *Ge-* " *neral* had done; and yet, how badly " did he requite his gracious Protector, " in making an *Ephod*, to be an Inſtru- " ment of Idolatry, and a Means, in Af- " ter-Ages, to alienate the Hearts of the " People? And how implacable was his " Revenge, in cruſhing the Princes of " *Succoth* under Thorns, and putting the " Inhabitants of *Penuel* all to Death, mere- " ly for denying him ſome Proviſions, " which, after all, he had no Right to " demand?

" BUT, of all the Men, that *judged* " *Iſrael*, commend me to *Samſon* (and " yet he is recorded among the Worthies " of old) for a compleat Pattern of Lewd- " neſs and Immorality, brutal Strength, " and brutal Paſſions. It was a Feat, " one would think, great enough (tho' " *Joſephus* makes no mention of it) for " *Shamgar* to kill ſix hundred of his Foes " with an *Ox-Goad* only; but what is " this to the *Heaps upon Heaps*, which " *Samſon* ſlew with the Jaw-Bone of an " Aſs; and to the Waters which guſh'd " out at the Socket of one of the Teeth " of the ſame Jaw-Bone ſo very oppor- " tunely to allay his Thirſt? A ſervice- " able Weapon this, both to deſtroy his " Enemies, and refreſh himſelf!

" IT may ſavour of Spite and Malice " perhaps, for him to ſet the Country in " a Blaze, and burn down all the poor " People's Corn, merely becauſe his Wife, " whom he left firſt, had play'd the Jilt, " and betaken herſelf to another Man; " but it would really raiſe one's Won- " der, to think, where he could poſſibly " get ſuch Multitudes of *Foxes*, as would " do the Work: And tho' we ſhould al- " low, that, after his Hair was grown " again, he might have Strength enough " to pull down the Houſe, where the " *Philiſtines* were feaſting; yet it ſeems " hardly conſiſtent with the Rules of " *Architecture*, that a Fabrick, able to " contain three thouſand People, ſhould " have its whole Weight ſupported by two " Pillars only.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

" THE Truth is, *Samſon*'s Character " at beſt is but a rough and uncouth one; " and ſome Things are ſaid of his Exploits, " that ſeem to exceed the Bounds of " Probability. But, the Wonder of all is, " how he comes to be called a *Judge of* " *Iſrael*, who, in all Appearance, was " good for Nothing elſe, but to kill the " Men, and lie with the Women: And, " as eaſily may we conceive, in what " Senſe *(f) Wine may cheer God*, as how " *the Spirit of the Lord* might *come upon* " *him*, whoſe Actions were ſo *diametrically* " oppoſite to every Motion of that bleſſed " *Inmate*.

" IT may well exerciſe our Wonder " again, why none of theſe Judges (whoſe " Office it was to reform all Abuſes) ſet " about the Extirpation of Idolatry. The " Princes of *Iſrael* were certainly in the " Right (tho' *Joſhua* in all his Wars never " did it) in having Recourſe to the *Oracle* " of God; and yet the *Inſtruments* and " *Offices* of Religion ſeem to be ſtrangely " blended, when the *Levite* in *Micah*'s " Houſe pretended to anſwer the *Da-* " *nites* every whit as well by a *Tera-* " *phim*, which was no more than a *Pa-* " *gan* Idol. And tho' the other *Levite*, " mention'd in this Hiſtory, might not " have ſufficient Reaſon for cutting his " dead Wife into Pieces, and ſending " them about to every Tribe; yet cer- " tainly the *Iſraelites* acted a juſt Part, in " eſpouſing the Quarrel: And therefore " we cannot conceive, why God ſhould " ſuffer the *Benjamites*, theſe bold Con- " temners of all Goodneſs, to be twice " ſucceſsful againſt them. And when, in " Proceſs of Time, the other Tribes had " got the better of them, 'tis ſtill another " Paradox, how their Minds came to be " ſo chang'd towards them, as to ſtick

(f) Judg. ix. 13.

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" at no Means (neither Rapes nor Mur-
" thers) to recruit their Tribe, and effect
" their Reſtauration.

" WITHOUT entering therefore into
" the *odd* Story, which is told of *Boaz*
" and *Ruth*, and by what a ſhameleſs
" Contrivance, the young Widow drew
" in the old Man to marry her; we may
" adventure to ſay, that during this Period,
" the *Iſraelites* gave ſmall Proof of their
" being the *peculiar People* of God; and
" that the Rulers, whom he is ſaid to
" have *rais'd up*, were the very reverſe of
" what they ſhould have been, *(g) a Ter-*
" *ror to good Works*, rather than *Evil*,
" and Promoters of Wickedneſs and Ido-
" latry, rather *than Avengers, to execute*
" *Wrath upon thoſe*, that were guilty of
" them."

Anſwer'd, by ſhewing the Power and Authority of theſe Judges.

JUDGES, which, in *Hebrew*, are *Shophetim*, were a Kind of Magiſtrates, not much unlike the *Archontes* among the *Athenians*, and the *Dictators*, among the *Romans*. The *Carthaginians*, a Colony among the *Tyrians*, had a Sort of Rulers, whom they called *Suffetes*, or *Shophetim*, much of the ſame Extent of Power; and *Grotius*, in the Beginning of his Commentary on this Book of *Judges*, compares them to thoſe *Chiefs*, that were in *Gaul*, in *Germany*, and *Britain*, before the *Romans* introduc'd another Form of Government. Their *Power* conſiſted in a *Medium* (as it were) between that of a King and an ordinary Magiſtrate, ſuperior to the latter, but not ſo abſolute as the former. They were indeed no more than God's *Vicegerents*, and every attempt to raiſe themſelves to *regal* Dignity was look'd upon as an Uſurpation upon his Right, who alone was to be conſider'd as the *Sovereign* of the *Hebrews*; and therefore we find *Gideon* refuſing this ſupreme Authority, when it was offer'd him; *(h) I will not rule over you, neither ſhall my Son rule over you; the Lord ſhall rule over you.*

THE *Honour* of theſe Judges laſted for Life, but their *Succeſſion* was not always continu'd; for there were frequent Interruptions in it, and the People liv'd often under the Dominion of Strangers, without any Government of their own. According to common Cuſtom, they were generally appointed by God. The Gifts which he inveſted them with, and the Exploits he enabled them to do, were a Call ſufficient to that Office: But, in Caſes of extreme Exigence, the People made ſometimes Choice of ſuch, as they thought beſt qualify'd to reſcue them out of their Oppreſſion, without waiting for any divine Deſignation.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

THEIR Right extended ſo far, as to arbitrate in all Affairs of War and Peace, and to determine all Cauſes; but then they had none at all to make any new Laws, or lay any new Taxes upon the People. Their *Dominion* did ſeldom reach over all the Land; but, as it often happen'd, that the Oppreſſions, which occaſion'd a Recourſe to their Aſſiſtance, were felt in particular Tribes, or Provinces only; ſo the Judges, which were either rais'd, or choſen to procure a Deliverance from theſe Grievances, did not extend their Command over all the Land in general, but over that Diſtrict only, which they were appointed to deliver.

And their Liableneſs to be wicked.

IN ſhort, theſe Judges were by their Office the Protectors of the Laws, the Defenders of Religion, and the Avengers of all Crimes, eſpecially of that of *Idolatry*; and yet it muſt be own'd, that theſe were Men of the like *Paſſions* and *Infirmities* with others, and that the great Advantages, which, under God, they procur'd for the *Iſraelites*, did not exempt them from that Frailty, which is incident to all human Things.

THE ſacred Story indeed tells us, that *(i) the Lord raiſed up Judges, which delivered the* Iſraelites out of the Hands of thoſe, that ſpoil'd them, *and that when he raiſed them up he was with them*, i. e. he communicated to them Gifts, both *natural* and *ſupernatural*, according to the Exigencies of his People, and, in all their Encounters

(g) Rom. xiii. 3, 4. (h) Judg. viii. 23. (i) Ibid. ii. 16, 18.

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Encounters with their Enemies, attended them with a peculiar Providence: But as well may we infer, that every *General*, who fights the King of *England*'s Battles with Succeſs, ſhould be a Man of ſingular Sanctity, as that thoſe, who were employ'd under God in that Capacity, ſhould lead Lives anſwerable to their high Character. The Power of working Miracles is not always accompany'd with an holy Life. Many, that ſhall ſay unto Chriſt, *(k) Have not we propheſied in thy Name, and in thy Name caſt out Devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful Works*, by Reaſon of the Iniquity of their Lives ſhall find no Acceptance with him: What Wonder is it then, to behold ſome, both Kings and Conquerors, even while they ride in Triumph over the vanquiſh'd Foes, tamely led captive by their own Paſſions; ſo that while we cannot but admire them for their *military* Exploits, we are forc'd to blame and cenſure them for their private Conduct?

To mention one for all. *Samſon*, a Perſon born for the Caſtigation of the *Philiſtines*, and to be a Pattern of Valour to all ſucceeding *Heroes*, forgot himſelf in the Arms of a *Dalilah*, and, to the Paſſion he had for a baſe perfidious Woman, ſacrific'd thoſe Gifts, which God had beſtow'd on him for the Deliverance of his *Church*, and ſo, to all Ages, he became a ſad Example of the Corruption and Infirmities of human Nature. The like perhaps, in other Reſpects, may be ſaid of the reſt of the *Judges:* But then we are to remember, that they were Perſons under a particular *OEconomy* of Providence; that their Conduct therefore is no Direction to us, tho' their Paſſions the Almighty might make uſe of (and therefore tolerate) for the Accompliſhment of his wiſe Ends: *Howbeit they meaned not ſo, neither did their Heart think ſo, (l)* as the Prophet expreſſes himſelf upon the like Occaſion.

Ehud's Murther of Eglon.

WHETHER it be lawful, according to the Right of Nature and Nations, for *Subjects* to reſcue themſelves from *Tyranny* by taking away the Life of the *Tyrant*, and to recover their Country, which has been unjuſtly taken from them, by deſtroying the *Uſurper*, is a Queſtion, that has been much debated, and what, at preſent, we need not enter into, for the Vindication of *Ehud*'s Fact. It is the Obſervation of the learned *(m) Grotius*, that the Authority of the King of *Moab* was never legitimiz'd by any Convention of the *Iſraelites*, and, conſequently, that they were at Liberty to ſhake off his Yoke, whenever they found a convenient Opportunity. The only Difficulty is, *(n)* whether a *private* Man might make himſelf an Inſtrument in effecting this, in the Manner that *Ehud* did? But to this it is reply'd, that *Ehud* was no *private* Man, but acted by a Warrant and Authority from God: And, to this Purpoſe, the Hiſtory acquaints us, that *(o) when* Ehud *had made an End of offering the Preſent*, which the *Iſraelites* ſent to *Eglon*, he was upon his Return home, and *had gone as far as the Quarries, which were by* Gilgal. The Word *Peſil*, which is here render'd *Quarries*, moſt commonly ſignifies (as indeed it is in the Marginal Note, as well as the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate) graven Images*, which it is not improbable the *Moabites* had ſet up in this Place, rather than any other, in pure Contempt of the God of *Iſrael*, who had for ſo long a Time made *Gilgal* famous by his Preſence in the Tabernacle, while it ſtood there.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

THESE *Images* when *Ehud* beheld, his *(p)* Spirit was ſtirred with a juſt Indignation within him; and therefore, proceeding no farther in his Journey Home, he diſmiſs'd his Attendants, and went himſelf back, with a Reſolution to revenge this Affront to God, as well as the Oppreſſion of his People.

THAT this his Return was directed by a divine Impulſe and Inſtigation, is evident, I think, from the Hazard of the Enterprize he was going upon, and the many favourable

(k) Matth. vii. 22. (l) Iſa. x. 7. (m) De Jure Belli & Pacis, lib. i. c. 4. § 19. (n) *Saurin*'s Diſſert, ſur *Heglon* tué par *Ehud*. (o) Judg. iii. 11, &c. (p) *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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favourable Occaſions that accompany'd the Execution of it. For, how could any Man in his Senſes think that a ſingle Perſon, as he was, ſhould ever be able to compaſs the Death of a King, amidſt the Circle of his Guards and Attendants? How could he expect that an Enemy, as he was, ſhould be admitted to a private Audience? or that, if he ſhould prove ſo lucky, the King ſhould be ſo far infatuated, as to order all the Company to quit the Room? The killing the King muſt have been a great Difficulty under theſe Circumſtances; but then, his making his Eſcape, had all the Signs of an Impoſſibility in it: And yet, without his eſcaping, the Deſign of delivering his Country muſt have been abortive. Upon the whole therefore it appears, that nothing, but a divine Inſtinct, could have given him Courage to ſet about the Thing; and therefore it was not all Fallacy, when he told *Eglon*, that *he had a Meſſage from God unto him*, becauſe God had ſent, and commiſſion'd him to kill him: So that, what he did in this Caſe, he did not of himſelf, or from his own mere Motion, but by Virtue of an Order, which he had receiv'd from God, who had deſtinated this *Oppreſſor* of his People to this *untimely* Kind of Death.

This ſeems to be the only Way, whereby we can apologize for *Ehud*, in a Fact, which by no Means is to be made a Precedent, and, without a divine Warrant, is in no Caſe to be juſtify'd. But, as for the Holy Scriptures, wherein this Action is related *ſimply*, and without either Diſlike or Approbation, why ſhould they ſuffer in our Eſteem upon that Account, any more than *Livy*, *Thucydides*, or any other *Heathen* Author, for recording the various Tranſactions (and ſome of them full as baſe and barbarous as this) that happen'd in the Ages whereof they treat?

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

It is a Miſtake to think, that every Perſon, whom the Scripture mentions, nay, whom the Scripture commends in ſome Reſpects, ſhould, in all others, be faultleſs and unblameable; and it would be a much greater Imputation upon the Truth and Authority of theſe ſacred Records, if the *People of God* were all made *Saints*, and no black Actions recorded of them; ſince it is the receiv'd Character of a good Hiſtorian, *that, as he ſhould not dare to relate any Thing that is* falſe, *ſo neither ſhould he conceal any Thing that is* true.

And Jael's *Murther of* Siſera *conſider'd.*

There is ſomething peculiar in relation to the Fact of *Jael*, and that is the Words of the *Propheteſs*, in her triumphant Song: *(q) Bleſſed above Women ſhall* Jael, *the Wife of* Heber, *the* Kenite, *be*; *bleſſed ſhall ſhe be above Women in the Tent*; which ſome look upon as a Commendation of *Jael*, and conſequently, an Approbation of the Murther of *Siſera: (r)* But *Deborah* herein might only propheſy, how, and in what Manner, the *Iſraelites* would be affected towards that Woman, by whoſe Means (tho' perhaps not in the moſt *commendable* Way) they had been deliver'd from a very dangerous Enemy.

'Tis natural for us, when at any Time we are reſcu'd from an Adverſary, by whom we have ſuffer'd much, and have Reaſon to dread more; 'tis natural, I ſay, for us to wiſh well to the Perſon, by whoſe Means he was taken off; nor are we apt to conſider the Action according to the Meaſure of ſtrict Virtue, by reaſon of the Benefit, which accrues to us thereby. *Deborah* might therefore mean no more, than what were the common Notions of Mankind in a Caſe of this Nature. But, even † admitting her Words to be a Commendation of the Fact, we might, very likely, perceive ſeveral Reaſons for it,

(q) Judg. v. 24. (r) *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† One of our Annotators has another Way of accounting for the Commendation, which is given to *Jael* in *Deborah*'s Song, and that is by giving up the Divine Inſpiration of it. "It is not to be deny'd, *ſays he*, but that there "are ſome Words, Paſſages, and Diſcourſes recorded in Scripture, which are not divinely inſpir'd, becauſe ſome of "them were utter'd by the *Devil*, and others by the holy Men of God, but miſtaken: Such is the Diſcourſe of "*Nathan*

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it, if we had but a Knowledge of ſome Circumſtances, which we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, tho' the Scripture has not related them to us.

IT is certain, that the *Kenites* deſcended from *Hobab*, the Son of *Jethro*, Father-in-law to *Moſes*, were *(s)* at firſt invited to go with the *Iſraelites* into the Land of *Canaan*, and were all along kindly treated by them. They indeed had no Share in the Diviſion of the Land, nor were they permitted to dwell in their Cities; yet they had the free Uſe of their Country, and were allow'd to pitch their Tents (as their Manner of Life was) wherever they thought fit for the Convenience of their Cattle, tho' generally they choſe to continue in the Tribe of *Judah*. By this Means a ſtrict Friendſhip interfer'd, and a firm Alliance was always ſubſiſting between the *Iſraelites* and theſe People; whereas, between the *Kenites* and *Jabin*, there was no more than a bare Ceſſation of Hoſtilities, and tho' *Heber* and they continu'd *neutral* in this War, yet it was not without wiſhing well to their ancient Friends, the *Iſraelites*, among whom they liv'd.

NOW it is a receiv'd *Maxim* among all *Civilians*, that where two Compacts ſtand in Competition, and cannot be both obſerv'd, the *ſtronger* ſhould always have the Preference. An Agreement, for Inſtance, ſays *Puffendorf (t)*, that is made with an Oath, ſhould always ſuperſede that which is made without one. 'Tis but ſuppoſing then, that the two depending Treaties were of theſe different Kinds, and this will be a Circumſtance in Favour of *Jael*; but then if we may ſuppoſe farther, that *Jabin* was a grievous Tyrant, and *Siſera* the chief Inſtrument of his Tyranny; this *(u)* (according to the Opinion of ſome) will ſupply us with a full Apology for what ſhe did. " For there are certain Monſters in " Nature, *ſay they*, in whoſe Deſtruction " all Civil *Society* is concern'd. To do " any Thing to preſerve them, nay, to " ſlip a proper Opportunity of ridding the " World of them, (whatever Terms we " happen to be under with them) is to be " falſe to what we owe to the whole *Com-* " *munity*, under the Pretence of *Fidelity* " to a baſe *Ally*. When Matters are come " to ſuch an Extremity, that we muſt " fight with Men, as we do with wild " Beaſts, Fallacy of any Kind (which " at other Times is juſtly deteſted) may, " in ſome Meaſure, be then excus'd; " nor have they, who in their Dealings " with others, are regardleſs of all Laws, " both *human* and *divine*, any Reaſon to " complain, if, upon ſome Occaſions, " they meet with a Retaliation."

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JAEL, when ſhe took the *Hammer* and *Nail* in her Hand, might have this perhaps, and much more to ſay in her own Vindication: But what abſolves her moſt effectually with us, is, the Declaration, which *God* had made in Favour of the *Iſraelites*, by the wonderful Defeat of *Jabin*'s Army, and the Direction and Impulſe, wherewith he excited her to diſpatch his vanquiſh'd *General*. *(x)* Had ſhe been left to herſelf, ſhe would have been contented (one would think) to have let him laid ſtill, until *Barak*, who was

" *Nathan* to *David* (2 Sam. vii. 3.) which God preſently contradicted (Ver. 4, 5, *&c.*) and ſeveral Diſcourſes in *Job*, " which God himſelf declares to be unſound; *ye have not ſpoken of me the Thing that is right, as my Servant* Job *hath*, " Job xlii. 7. This being ſo, *continues he*, the worſt, that any malicious Man can infer from this Place, is, ——— That " this Song, tho' indited by a good Man, or Woman, was not *divinely* inſpir'd, but only compos'd by a Perſon piouſly " minded, and tranſported with Joy, for the Deliverance of God's People, but ſubject to Miſtake; who therefore, " out of Zeal to commend the happy Inſtrument of ſo great a Deliverance, might eaſily overlook the *Indirectneſs* " of the Means, by which it was accompliſh'd, and commended that, which ſhould have been diſlik'd. If " it be urg'd that the Song was compos'd by *Deborah*, a *Propheteſs*, and muſt conſequently be divinely inſpir'd, the " Anſwer is, 1ſt, That it is not certain what Kind of Propheteſs *Deborah* was, whether *extraordinary*, and infallible, " or *ordinary*, and ſo liable to Miſtake. But, 2dly, that every Expreſſion, even of a true and extraordinary Pro- " phet, was not divinely inſpir'd, as is evident from *Nathan*'s Miſtake above-mention'd, and from *Samuel*'s Error " concerning *Eliab*, whom (for his outward Stature and Comelineſs) he took *to be the Lord*'s Anointed." 1 Sam. xvi. 6. *Poole*'s Annotations.

(s) Numb. x. 29. *(t)* De Jure Nat. & Gent. lib. iv. c. 2. *(u)* Vid. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, and *Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur la Defaite de *Jabin*. *(x)* Scripture Vindicated, Part III.

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in Purſuit of him, had come up, and ſurpriz'd him. To fall upon him herſelf was an Enterprize exceedingly bold and hazardous, and above the Courage of her Sex; and therefore we may conclude, that if it was God, who inſpir'd her with this extraordinary Reſolution, ſhe was not to be blam'd (notwithſtanding the *Peace* between *Jabin* and her Family) for being *obedient to the heavenly* Impulſe; becauſe all Obligations to Man muſt neceſſarily ceaſe, when brought in Competition with our higher Obligations towards God.

Barak's *Faith clear'd.*

Whoever looks into the Catalogue of the Worthies, whom the Author to the *Hebrews* enumerates, will ſoon perceive, that, as he is far from being exact in the Order, wherein he places them, ſo; by the *Faith*, for which he commends them, he means no more, than a Belief of what God told them, and ready Obedience to his Commands, whenever they were ſignify'd to them by a proper Authority. *Deborah* was, at this Time, a very remarkable Woman, famous for the Adminiſtration of Juſtice, and Determination of Controverſies among the People; but, notwithſtanding this, it would have been Raſhneſs in *Barak*, to have gone upon ſo hazardous an Undertaking without any farther Aſſurance than this. He did not abſolutely refuſe to go, nay, he offer'd to go upon the firſt Notice, and for this his Faith is commended in Scripture; but then he was minded to have ſome farther Conviction, that this Notice was from God, and of this he could not have a better Proof, than if the *Propheteſs* herſelf would go, and ſhare with him the Fate of the Battle.

The Enemy was as formidable an one, as ever the *Iſraelites* had to encounter. *Nine hundred Chariots of Iron*, when *(y)* in Times of greater military Preparation, *Mithridates* had but *one* hundred, and *Darius* no more than *two* hundred in their Armies, was enough to inject Terror into any *Commander*, whoſe Forces conſiſted all of Foot, and had no proper Defence againſt theſe deſtructive Engines. Good Reaſon had he therefore to apprehend, that the People would not ſo readily have inliſted themſelves into the publick Service, had there not been a Perſon of her Character to appear at the Head of it. She was a *Propheteſs*, and had receiv'd frequent Revelations from God; and therefore, when the People ſaw her perſonally engag'd in it, they would be the apter to be perſuaded, that the Expedition was by God's Appointment, and therefore, without all Peradventure, would be attended with Succeſs. And as *Deborah*'s joining with *Barak* in the Expedition, might be thought a good Expedient to raiſe a ſufficient Number of Forces; ſo might it equally be thought a Means effectual, both to prevent their Deſertion, and to animate them to the Fight: And accordingly *(z) Joſephus* tells us, "That, when the two "Armies lay encamp'd, one within the "Sight of the other, the *Iſraelites* were "ſtruck with ſuch a Terror at the infinite "Odds of the Enemy in Numbers, that "both *General* and Soldiers were once "upon the very Point of ſhifting for "themſelves, without ſo much as ſtriking "a Blow; but upon *Deborah*'s Aſſurance, "that it was the Cauſe of God, and that "he himſelf would aſſiſt, and bring them "off, they were prevail'd upon to ſtand "the Shock of the Battle."

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But there is one Advantage more, which *Barak* might more eſpecially promiſe to himſelf in having *Deborah*'s Company in this Expedition, and that is, that he might not want an Oracle to reſort to upon any Emergency, that might happen; becauſe he was perſuaded, that God, who, by her *Means*, had put his People upon this Enterprize, would not fail, by her *Mouth*, to direct him in the Management of it. And, accordingly, in the grand Point of all, *viz. when it was the propereſt Time to engage the Enemy*, we find the Benefit, which he receiv'd from her Company and Converſation: *(a) Up*, ſays ſhe; *for*

(y) Le Clerc's Commentary. *(z)* Antiq. lib. v. c. 6. *(a)* Judges iv. 14.

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for this is the Day, in which the Lord has delivered Siſera *into thy Hand. Is not the Lord gone out before thee? So* Barak *went down from Mount* Tabor, *and ten Thouſand Men after him, and the Lord diſcomfited* Siſera, *and all his Chariots, and all his Hoſt, with the Edge of the Sword.*

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Gideon's Faith aſſerted.

THE Faith of thoſe Perſons, whoſe Actions are recorded in the *Old Teſtament*, and *Fame* commemorated in the *New*, conſiſted (as we ſaid) in a firm Belief of God's Declarations, and a ready Obedience to his Commands; and how can we account *Gideon* culpable in either of theſe Reſpects? When the Angel of the Lord (or a Perſon much ſuperior, as ſome ſuppoſe) appear'd to him, and brought him the News of God's having appointed him to deliver his People from the Oppreſſion of the *Midianites*, he ſeems indeed at firſt to be willing to decline the Office, as conſcious of his own Incapacity; but deſires withal to have ſome Conviction given him, (as who, upon the like Occaſion, would not have deſir'd ſome?) that the Meſſenger came from Heaven, and was in Reality no *Impoſtor*; but when once he was ſatisfy'd in this, he never pretended to diſpute the divine Command.

HE knew very well, that, when he pulled down the Altar and Grove of *Baal*, he muſt neceſſarily incenſe the whole Country againſt him, and run the Hazard of his own Life; and yet, to do it more effectually, he took to his Aid ten of his Father's Servants, and, that he might meet with no Moleſtation, did it in the Night. He knew very well, that when he *ſounded a Trumpet* in order to form an Inſurrection in the Country, and to raiſe ſome Forces to aſſert his Nation's Liberty, the *Midianites* would interpret this as an open Declaration of War, and come againſt him with an Army, as numerous as the *Sand on the Sea-ſhore* for Multitude; but this he matter'd not. He knew, that two and thirty thouſand Men, when he had rais'd them, were but a Handful, in Compariſon of the Enemy; and yet, to ſee two and twenty thouſand of theſe deſert him all at *once*, and of the ten thouſand, that remain'd, no more left at *laſt* than bare three hundred; this was enough to ſtagger any one's Mind, that had not a firm Reliance on the Word, and Promiſes of God. He knew, that three hundred Men, had they been all *Giants*, and arm'd *Cap-a-pee* with Coats of *Mail*, would not be able to do any great Execution againſt ſo numerous a Foe; but when he found, that, inſtead of being arm'd, he was to attack the Enemy *naked*, and, inſtead of Swords and Spears, (as uſual) his Soldiers were to march in ſuch a Plight, as was never ſeen before, with every one a Light, a Pitcher, and a Trumpet in his Hand; and, when they came up with their Enemy, were to break their Pitchers, flouriſh their Lights, ſound their Trumpets, and, inſtead of regular fighting, were only to ſhout and roar, like ſo many Men either *mad* or *drunk*; who but a *Gideon*, that had his Faith confirm'd by ſo many Viſions and Miracles before, would have obey'd, and put in Execution ſuch Orders, as muſt have been thought wild, and frantick, and abſurd, had they proceeded from any other Mouth but God's?

WELL therefore might he be allow'd to requeſt a Repetition, nay, a Multiplication of Miracles, who was to have the Trial of his Faith and Obedience carry'd to ſuch an Extremity: But the Truth of the Matter is, that it was not for his own Sake, that he made this Requeſt. He had been ſufficiently convinc'd by the Fire's breaking out of the Rock at the Touch of the Rod in the Angel's Hand, that nothing was impoſſible to God, and that the Means, which he directed (how incongruous ſoever they might appear to Men) would certainly not fail of their Effect: But it was for the Sake of his *Allies*, that had juſt now join'd him in this Expedition, that he ſent up his Petition to God, to have them likewiſe ſatisfy'd; and therefore we may obſerve, that when all the *Quota*'s were come up, and encamp'd together, then

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then (very likely in the Audience of the whole Army) he requeſted of God, *(b) and ſaid, if thou wilt ſave* Iſrael *by my Hand, as thou haſt ſaid, behold I will put a Fleece of Wool in the Floor*, &c. It was for their Sakes, I ſay, that the Miracles were wrought, that they, who were to ſhare in ſo hazardous a War, and *to deſtroy the Armies of the Aliens* with ſo ſmall a Force, nay, with no Force at all, ſhould have ſome Aſſurance given them, that the God of *Iſrael*, who had ſo often promis'd their Fore-Fathers, that if they would continue in his Favour, *(c) one of them ſhould chaſe a Thouſand, and two of them put ten Thouſand to Flight*, was determin'd to aſſiſt them in this Enterprize.

His puniſhing the Gadites *vindicated.*

If ever this Promiſe was literally fulfilled, it was in this Defeat, which *Gideon* gave the *Midianites:* But the Inhabitants of *Succoth* and *Penuel*, it ſeems, made but a Jeſt and Ridicule of it, for which they receiv'd a condign Puniſhment; but of what Kind their Puniſhment was, *Commentators* are not ſo well agreed. *(d)* The Word in the *Hebrew* ſignifies *Threſhing*, and thence it is generally inferr'd, that *Gideon* caus'd the principal Men of *Succoth*, who had deny'd his Soldiers Proviſion in their Diſtreſs, to be ſtripp'd naked, laid flat on the Ground, † and a good Quantity of Thorns and Briars heaped on them; that ſo, by Cart-Wheels, or other heavy Carriages paſſing over them, their Fleſh might be pierc'd and torn, and themſelves tortur'd, if not quite cruſh'd to Death.

This was a Puniſhment, not much unlike what *David* inflicted on the *Ammonites*, after he had taken their City *Rabbah*; but the *Ammonites*, in my Opinion, did not ſo much deſerve it, as theſe: For thus ſtands the Caſe. *Gideon* was now in Purſuit of two Kings, who, after the general *Rout* of their Army, were making their Eſcape with a Party of five thouſand Men. Coming to two Places in the Tribe of *Gad*, who were *Iſraelites* as well as he, and equally concern'd to have been venturing their Lives for the publick Liberty, he is deny'd a ſmall Refreſhment for his Men fatigu'd all the Night with fighting for them, and, without ſome Recruit, in no Condition to continue their Purſuit: So that, as far as in them lay, inſtead of aſſiſting their gallant Country-Men, who had merited every Thing from their Hands, theſe *Gadites* took part with the Enemy, and did what they could to facilitate their Eſcape, by denying ſome Relief to their weary Purſuers. By the Right of War *Gideon* might have demanded this Help from any Nation, but much more from a People, who were embark'd in the ſame Cauſe, and whoſe Refuſal of ſo ſmall a Boon had the Aggravation of Perfidy and Ingratitude, as well as Hard-heartedneſs, to inflame its Guilt.

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Nor was this all. His Brethren, the *Gadites*, not only refus'd him this common Courteſy, but were very witty likewiſe, in making their Jeſts and *Sarcaſms* upon *Gideon*. They upbraided him with the Smallneſs of his Army, and magnify'd the Strength of his Enemies, and thereby, not only did all they could to diſcourage his Men in their Purſuit, but endeavour'd likewiſe to have it believ'd, that there was no Interpoſition of God in gaining this Victory, and that *Gideon* would never be able to accompliſh it: And ſo, to their other vile Qualities, they added Inſult and Irreligion; a Contempt of God, and a Diſparagement of the Man, *whom the Lord had made ſo ſtrong for himſelf.* And therefore it is not at all to be wonder'd at, that *Gideon*, under all this Exaſperation, ſhould chuſe to bring the two captive Kings (with whom they had upbraided him) in Triumph to theſe two Places, and then reſent the Affront, which was done to God, as well as himſelf, by making a ſevere Example of ſome of the chief Offenders.

His Ephod explain'd.

It is ſuggeſted indeed by ſome, that *Gideon* was as great an Offender as any in his making an *Ephod* for the Purpoſe of Idolatry; but before we admit of ſo raſh a Cenſure,

(b) Judges vi. 37. *(c)* Deut. xxxii. 30. *(d)* *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† This was the Manner of threſhing their Corn in the *Eaſtern* Countries.

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a Cenſure, we ſhould enquire a little into the Nature of this *Ephod*, and for what poſſible Purpoſe it was at firſt made.

(e) AN *Ephod*, we know, is a common Veſtment belonging to Prieſts in general; but that of the High-Prieſt was of very great Value. This Veſtment however was not ſo peculiar to the Prieſts, but that ſometimes we find the Laity (as in the Caſe of *David* bringing Home the Ark of God) allow'd to wear it; and therefore ſome have imagin'd, that the *Ephod*, which *Gideon* made, was only a rich and coſtly *Robe of State*, which, on certain Occaſions, he might wear to denote the Station, he held in the *Jewiſh* Republick. But if his Intent was only to diſtinguiſh himſelf from others by ſuch a particular Veſtment, how this could give Occaſion to the People's falling into Idolatry, or any Way *become a Snare to* Gideon *and his Houſe*, we cannot conceive.

OTHERS therefore ſuppoſe, that the Word *Ephod* is a ſhort Expreſſion to denote the High-Prieſt's Breaſt-Plate, together with the *Urim* and *Thummim*; and hence, by an eaſy Figure, they are led to think, that *to make an Ephod* is to eſtabliſh a Prieſthood; and thereupon conclude, that *Gideon*'s Crime, in *making this Ephod*, was not to eſtabliſh Idolatry, but only to inſtitute another Prieſthood, beſides that, which God had appointed in *Aaron* and his Poſterity: And, to this Purpoſe, they ſuppoſe, that he erected a private Tabernacle, an Altar, a Mercy-Seat, with Cherubims, *&c.* that, being now made the ſupreme Governor, he might conſult God at his own Houſe, in ſuch difficult Points, as occurr'd in his Adminiſtration.

BUT, beſides that it is not eaſy to imagine, that a Man, familiar with God, and choſen by him, as *Gideon* was, ſhould after ſo ſignal a Victory as he had obtain'd, immediately *apoſtatize*, as he muſt have done, had he ſet up an Oracle in his own Houſe; there ſeems to have been no Manner of Neceſſity for it, becauſe *Shiloh* (where the Tabernacle ſtood) was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, which adjoin'd to that of *Manaſſeh*, whereunto *Gideon* belong'd. *(f)* Nor ſhould it be forgotten, that this *Ephod* was *(g) ſet up in Ophrah*, which Place *Gideon (h)* quitted, as ſoon as he had reſign'd his publick Employ, and retiring to a Country-Houſe of his own in all Probability left this *Ephod* behind him: There is Reaſon therefore to believe, that the Deſign of ſetting it up, was merely to be a Monument of his remarkable Victory over the *Midianites*, in like Manner as other Conquerors had done before him; only, as the common Cuſtom was, to erect a Pillar, or hang up Trophies upon the like Occaſion, he choſe rather to make an *Ephod*, or Prieſt's Habit, (perhaps all of ſolid Gold) as a Token, that he aſcrib'd this Victory only to God, and triumph'd in nothing ſo much, as in the Reformation of the true Religion by that Means. This was an Action of no bad Intent in *Gideon*, tho', in After-Times, when the People began to return to *Idolatry*, and had this Fancy, among others, that God would anſwer them at *Ophrah*, where this *Ephod* was, as well as at his Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, it was perverted to a bad Purpoſe. But, as this Abuſe aroſe from the mad Caprice of the People, and not from any ill Intent in *Gideon*, he is no more chargeable therewith, than *Moſes* was with the idolatrous Worſhip, which the *Iſraelites*, in future Ages, paid to the *Brazen-Serpent*, which he, for very beneficial Purpoſes at firſt ſet up.

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IT is generally ſuppos'd, *(i)* that the ſacred Hiſtory has not furniſh'd us with a compleat Catalogue of the ſeveral *Judges*, that govern'd *Iſrael*, from the Death of *Joſhua* to the Reign of *Saul*; and that even of thoſe, whom it takes Notice of, it relates nothing, but what was moſt remarkable in their Lives and Actions: And yet, notwithſtanding this Conciſeneſs, it is far more exact and inſtructive, than the Hiſtory of *Joſephus*, to which *(k) Scaliger*

Joſephus's Hiſtory cenſur'd.

(e) Le Clerc's and *Patrick*'s Commentaries. *Pool*'s Annotations, *&c.* *(f) Patrick*'s Commentary. *(g)* Judg. viii. 27. *(h)* Ver. 29. *(i) Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur *Heglon* tué par *Ehud*. *(k)* Proleg. de Emend. Temp.

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ſeems to give a Preference above all others. The Fault of *Joſephus* (as any one may perceive it) is this:——That he omits the Account of ſeveral Miracles, which the holy Scripture relates, for fear that other Nations, to whom he writes, ſhould think he gives too much into the *Marvellous*, tho', at the ſame Time, he makes no Scruple of ſacrificing the Glory of God to his own private Character.

For this Reaſon it is, that *(l)* he ſays nothing of the Angel's touching with the End of his Rod the Sacrifice, which *Gideon* had prepar'd, and ſo cauſing Fire to flame out of the Rock, and conſume it; nothing of the two *Signs*, which God was pleas'd to grant him, for the Confirmation of his and his Confederates Faith, exhibited in the Fleece's being at one Time wet, and, at another, dry; nothing, of his Zeal in demoliſhing the Altar and Grove of *Baal*, for which he drew upon himſelf the Indignation of all the Abettors of Idolatry; and here, in the Matter of *Shamgar*, he ſuppreſſes the Circumſtances of his ſlaying an hundred *Philiſtines* with an *Ox-Goad*, tho' this be the only remarkable Action recorded of him, and what may, not improbably, be thus accounted for.

Shamgar's Valour with the Ox-goad.

In not many Ages after this, we read, that theſe very *Philiſtines*, with whom he had *here* to do, had diſarm'd the *Iſraelites* to that Degree, that *(m)* none in their whole Army, when they came to Action, had either Sword or Spear, but only *Saul* and *Jonathan* his Son; nay, that they would not ſo much as ſuffer a Smith to live among them, for fear of their providing themſelves with *military* Weapons, but oblig'd them to repair to them, whenever they wanted to ſharpen, or repair their Inſtruments of Huſbandry.

Now it muſt be allow'd, that the Scriptures ſay nothing of any ſuch Reduction as this, in the Days of *Shamgar:* But if ſuch was the Policy of the *Philiſtines* in the Beginning of *Saul*'s Reign, why may we not ſuppoſe that it commenc'd ſome Time ſooner? This certainly the Scripture tells us expreſsly, that, *(n) in the Days of* Shamgar, *the Highways were unoccupied, and the Inhabitants of Villages ceaſed*, by Reaſon of the *Philiſtines*, who came and plunder'd the Country, and carry'd off what Booty they pleas'd without Moleſtation; and therefore it is not unlikely, that, for Want of ſome regular Arms, (whereof the *Philiſtines* had ſtripp'd the *Iſraelites*) *Shamgar* might make himſelf a *Goad*, ſo well contriv'd, that with it he could kill any Man, without any Manner of Suſpicion, that it was made for that Purpoſe, but only for common Uſe; that with this Inſtrument he uſually went to plow; and when, at any Time, the *Philiſtines* made their Inroads into his Lands, he, with the Aſſiſtance of his Servants, (who perhaps were arm'd in the like Manner) fell upon them, and, at ſeveral Times, kill'd to the Number of ſix hundred of them in the Space of about twenty Years. This is a fair *Analyſis* of the Senſe of the Words; and where is the great Incongruity of this? Or what indeed is there in the whole, that an ordinary Maſter of a Family, with his *Domeſticks* about him, might not do, even tho' we ſhould not call in any ſupernatural Strength to his Aſſiſtance?

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

There is more Reaſon however, why we ſhould have recourſe to the ſupernatural Aid of God, in *Samſon*'s ſlaying a thouſand of theſe *Philiſtines*, at one Heat as it were, with no other Weapon, than the *Jaw-Bone of an Aſs*. *(o)* For tho' Aſſes in *Syria* (as the Learned affirm) are both ſtronger, and larger, than what we have with us, and their Bones conſequently better fitted for ſuch hard Service as this; yet it muſt be own'd, that it was by the wonderful Strength, that God infus'd into him, and not any Aptitude of the *Inſtrument*, he made uſe of, that he was enabled to do all this Execution, which is only incredible to thoſe, *(p)* that do not conſider the Power

And Samſon's with the Aſs's Jaw-Bone, accounted for.

(*l*) Antiq. lib. v. c. 8. (*m*) 1 Sam. xiii. 20, &c. (*n*) Judg. v. 6, 7. (*o*) *Pool*'s Annotations.
(*p*) *Patrick*'s Commentary.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1443, &c.

Power of God, who can raiſe our natural Strength to what Degree he pleaſes, and, at the ſame Time, infeeble the Spirits of thoſe, who oppoſe his Deſigns, in ſuch a Manner, that they ſhall have no Power to help themſelves.

IT muſt be own'd however, that there are ſome Circumſtances in this Tranſaction, which might poſſibly intimidate the *Philiſtines*, and thereby contribute to facilitate the Slaughter, which *Samſon* made among them. The People of *Judah* had now prevail'd with him to ſuffer himſelf to be bound, and conducted to the *Philiſtines* Camp: The *Philiſtines*, as ſoon as they ſaw him coming, ran out with Joy to receive him, and very likely forgot to take their Arms with them, as knowing for certainty, that he was ſafe enough now, and bound, as we ſay, to his good Behaviour. But when, contrary to their Expectation, they ſaw him firſt break the Cords ſo eaſily and ſuddenly, and then coming upon them with ſuch Fury and Vengeance, *(q)* 'tis not unlikely, that this might put them in no ſmall Confuſion, and, as they ſtraggled about in their Flight, give him the Opportunity of ſlaying them one by one, as he came up with them.

THIS, we muſt allow, is the higheſt Inſtance of perſonal *Proweſs*, that we any where read of; and yet *profane Hiſtorians* inform us of other Men, who, by their mere natural Courage, unaſſiſted by any divine Power, (as the Scripture informs us *Samſon* was) have made great Havock among their Enemies: For *Flavius Vopiſcus* reports, that in the *Sarmatick* War, *Aurelian* ſlew forty eight Men in one Day, and in ſeveral Days * 950, which diminiſhes the Wonder of this Atchievement of *Samſon*'s not a little; eſpecially conſidering, that the *Philiſtines*, in their Surprize, might think that this was all a Trick and Management of his *Conductors* to get ſo many unarmed Men into their Power, and that they too were ready to fall upon them, and aſſiſt him, in caſe they ſhould make any Oppoſition againſt their *Champion*.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

THAT *Samſon*, after ſo long a Fatigue, ſhould be almoſt ready to * die with Thirſt, is no ſtrange Thing at all; but the Queſtion is, how, in a Place where no Water was, he came to have his Thirſt allay'd? The *Hebrew* Word, *Mactes*, does properly ſignify the *Socket* in which the great Teeth in the Jaw are faſten'd; and, from hence *Bochart*, among many others, endeavours to maintain by Arguments, that God made one of theſe Teeth drop out of the Jaw, wherewith *Samſon* had done all this Execution, and immediately a Stream of Water guſh'd out from thence: But, with all due Deference to the Learning of ſo great a Man, *(r)* 'tis ſomewhat ſtrange, that he ſhould not obſerve (when he had this Paſſage under Conſideration) that ſuch a Miracle as this would be inconſiſtent with the Words which follow, *(s) wherefore he called the Name thereof*, i. e. of the Fountain of Water, which guſh'd out, *En-hakkor*, or *the Well of him that cried* to God, *which is in* Lehi *even unto this Day*. *Lehi* is here therefore the proper Name of a Place.

The Water from the Jaw-Bone, how.

This

(q) *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* Upon this Occaſion the Boys made a Song, (not much unlike that, which *Samſon* made of himſelf, Judg. xv. 16) which, after a military Manner, they ſhouted in their Dances. Mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, mille, decollavimus unus homo; Mille, mille, mille, mille, decollavimus; Mille, mille, mille: Vivat, qui mille, mille occidit: tantum vini habet nemo, quantum effudit Sanguinis. Vid. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* *Joſephus* gives us a ſtrange Account of the Reaſon of *Samſon*'s Thirſt, and what there is no Manner of Foundation for in the Scripture. "*Samſon, (ſays he)* was ſo tranſported with the Thoughts of this Victory, that he had the Va-" nity to aſſume the Honour of the Action to himſelf, without aſcribing the Glory of it to God's Power and Provi-" dence, as he ought to have done: But while this arrogant and over-weening Humour was yet upon him, he found " himſelf ſeized with a violent parching Thirſt, which gave him to underſtand, that, after all his Succeſſes, he was " but Fleſh and Blood ſtill, and liable to human Infirmities. The Senſe of this Diſorder brought him to the Know-" ledge of himſelf, and to a penitent Confeſſion, that the Victory was God's, and that he was able to do nothing of " himſelf, without the Divine Aſſiſtance. He begg'd Pardon for his paſt Vanity and Preſumption. His Prayers " were not in vain; for immediately there guſh'd out of a Rock, that was hard by, a Stream of delicious Water to " relieve him in his raging Drought." Antiq. lib. v. c. 1.

(r) *Le Clerc*'s Commentary. (s) Judg. xv. 19.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

This Place had doubtleſs its Appellation from this Adventure of *Samſon*'s with the Jaw-Bone, and from this Place God caus'd a Spring to ariſe, that he might allay his Hero's Thirſt. For it is incongruous to think, that the Jaw of an Aſs, or any other Creature could have ſubſiſted to the Time, when the Author of this Book of *Judges* liv'd; or, (if, all this while, none ſhould have had the Curioſity to take away this wonderful Bone) that God ſhould, out of the Socket of one of its Teeth, cauſe a Stream of Water to flow, by one continual, uſeleſs Miracle.

It muſt then be a Miſtake in our Verſion, to render the Words, *God clave an hollow Place, which was in the Jaw*, when (according to the * Senſe of the Antients upon this Place) they ſhould be tranſlated, *which was in* Lehi. For the Truth of the Matter is, that tho' this Jaw be long extinct and gone, yet thoſe, who have travell'd through this Part of *Paleſtine*, do inform us, that, in the Suburbs of *Eleutheropolis*, where *Lehi* very likely ſtood, the Fountain, which aroſe upon this Occaſion, is ſtill remaining, and called *the Fountain of the Jaw*, to this Day.

But be that as it will, whether the Water, which refreſh'd *Samſon* in this his Diſtreſs, came from the Jaw-Bone, or (as others think) from a Cliff in a Rock, or an Hollow in the Earth, the Miracle is the ſame, tho' it may not be improper (whenever we can by an eaſier Interpretation) to take away Occaſion from thoſe that ſeek Occaſion to diſparage the Oracles of God.

Samſon *in all Points not to be vindicated.*

We are not however concern'd to vindicate *Samſon* in all his extravagant and outragious Actions; ſuch as his marrying an Idolatreſs, and then leaving her; his loving lewd Women, and diſcovering the great *Secret*, whereon his *All* depended, to a common *Proſtitute*; his killing ſome, and maiming others, who perhaps had never done him any perſonal Injury; and ſetting the whole Country on Fire, to burn their Corn-Fields and Vineyards, with many other Things, that might be alledg'd againſt him. All that we have to ſay is, that God rais'd him up to be a *Scourge* to the *Philiſtines*, and that, had there not been ſome *Peculiarities* in his Temper, he had not been ſo proper an Inſtrument in his Hand; or that had he not run himſelf ſo often into *Præmunires*, he would not have had ſo frequent Occaſion to employ the Strength, which God had given him, in extricating himſelf from thence by the Death and Deſtruction of his Enemies. Tho' therefore there was no *Fatality* in making him of this unruly Diſpoſition, (for that he contracted himſelf) yet there was a wiſe Direction of God's Providence in making his rugged Temper ſubſervient to his Purpoſes, and even out of his Faults and Enormities, extracting the Plagues and Puniſhment of his Foes; for *(t) ſurely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee*, ſays the *Pſalmiſt*, and *the Remainder of his Wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain.* This we may lay down, as a general Reaſon for God's making uſe of ſo furious an Inſtrument as *Samſon* was, in the Execution of his Will: And now let us examine a little into the other Inconſiſtencies, which ſome pretend to eſpy in the Sequel of this Story.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

Samſon's *Foxes accounted for.*

A certain *anonymous* Author, † in a Diſſertation upon *Samſon*'s *Foxes*, has ſolv'd

* To this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that the *Seventy Interpreters*, the *Chaldee Paraphraſt*, and *Joſephus* in his Hiſtory, make it to be a proper Name of a Place, whence the Waters guſh'd out. The Words in the *Septuagint* are Καὶ ἔῤῥηξεν ὁ Θεὸς τὸν ἐν Σιαγόνι, καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐξ αὐτοῦ ὕδωρ, *God clave an hollow Place* in the Ground, which was afterwards called *Lehi*, or *Siagon*, and out of it iſſu'd Water. *Joſephus* is quoted before, only he had theſe Words farther ὅθεν ὁ Σαμψὼν ἐκάλει τὸ χωρίον, Σαγόνα, *which Rock*, (ſays our Tranſlator of *Joſephus*) *from the Exploit of* Samſon, *bears the Name of a* Jaw, *unto this very Day.* And the Words of the *Paraphraſt* are directly to the ſame Purpoſe: So that it is much to be wonder'd at, how ſo learned and acute a Man as *Bochart*, ſhould overlook theſe Sentiments of the Antients. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

(t) Pſal. lxxvi. 10.

† Mr *Bernard*, in his *Repub. des Lettres*, *Oct.* 1707. Pag. 407. makes mention of a ſmall Treatiſe in 12mo, intituled, *Diſſertation ſur l'Aneſſe de* Balaam, *les Renards de* Samſon, *la Machoire d'âne*, &c. from whom I have extracted the Author's Sentiment, as Mr *Bernard* has repreſented it, but could, by no Means, meet with the Book itſelf, and cannot therefore properly enter into an Examination of the Author's Opinion: However, I thought convenient to make mention of it, becauſe there ſeems to be ſomething ingenious, as well as ſingular in it.

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A M. 2561, &c. Ant Chriſ. 1443, &c.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

ſolv'd the whole Difficulty of that Piece of Hiſtory, if we will but admit of his Suppoſitions. He ſuppoſes, that the Word *Schualim*, which we render *Foxes*, ſhould, with a little Variation, be written *Schoalim*, which denotes *Sheaves*, or rather *Shocks of Corn*; and that the Word *Zanab*, which, in our Tranſlation, is a *Tail*, equally ſignifies the *extream*, or *outermoſt Part* of any Thing. Thus, in an Orchard planted in the Form of a *Quincunx*, the farthermoſt Tree is called *Zanab*; and, in like Manner, the *extream* or *outſide* Shocks in a Field may be *ſo* called here; and then the Senſe of the Words will be, "That "*Samſon*, at different Places, ſet fire to "three hundred Shocks of Corn, which "ſtood in the Out-Parts of the Fields, "belonging to the *Philiſtines*, and ſo, by "the Fire's ſpreading from Shock to "Shock, deſtroy'd, in a Manner, all their "Crop."

BUT without entertaining any novel Interpretation, and which upon Examination perhaps will hardly bear the Teſt, we may adventure to ſay, that theſe three hundred Foxes, which *Samſon* is ſaid to have caught, are not, even in a *literal* Senſe, ſo incredible a Thing, nor ſo liable to Ridicule, as ſome may imagine. For we are to conſider, (as the learned *(u) Bochart*, from the Account of ſeveral Travellers, evinces) that the whole Country, eſpecially that Part of it, which belong'd to the Tribe of *Gad*, ſo abounded with Foxes, that from them *(x)* ſeveral Places took their Names: That, under the Name of Foxes, may not improperly be comprehended a Creature, very much like them, called *Thoës*, which go in ſuch Herds, that two hundred of them have been ſeen together at once; that the Manner of catching them was not (as we may imagine) by hunting only, but by Snares and Nets, as the abovemention'd Author plainly demonſtrates; and that *Samſon* did not do this alone by himſelf, in a Day and Night's Time, but that, being aſſiſted by his Servants and Neighbours, (as he was a Man of conſiderable Eminence in his Country) he might poſſibly be ſome Weeks in accompliſhing his Deſign.

HIS Deſign however will not appear ſo *romantick*, if we conſider what *Collections* have been made of Creatures, much wilder, and rarer, than Foxes; that *(y) Lucius Sylla*, when he was *Prætor*, order'd to be ſhewn, on the Amphitheatre, an hundred Lions; *Julius Cæſar*, when he was *Dictator*, four hundred; and that *(z)* the Emperor *Probus*, at one Spectacle, exhibited a thouſand Oſtriches, a thouſand Stags, an hundred *Lybian*, and a hundred *Syrian* Leopards, and an infinite Number of other ſtrange Creatures: And why then ſhould it be thought to be a Thing ſo incredible, as to need the Intervention of a Miracle (as ſome contend) for *Samſon*, with the Aſſiſtance of his Friends, who might be let into his Deſign, to get together, in ſome Time, three hundred *Foxes*, in a Country, that every where abounded with them?

FOXES, (we are none of us ignorant) are very apt to do a great deal of Miſchief, wherever they *abound*, and *(a)* therefore *Samſon* might have this farther Aim in collecting ſo many, *viz.* that thereby he might clear his own Country of ſuch noxious Animals, and at the ſame Time, that he very well knew, no Creature could be more convenient for his Purpoſe of annoying, and detrimenting his Enemies. For, as theſe Creatures are very ſwift of Foot, and have a natural Dread of Fire, they could not well fail (when once they were turn'd into it) of ſetting the ſtanding Corn in a Blaze, and then, as they were ty'd in Couples, Tail to Tail, *this* would make them draw one againſt the other, and ſo being retarded in their Flight, and ſtaying longer in a Place, they would give the Fire more Time to ſpread itſelf, and make a Conflagration univerſal.

UPON the whole therefore we may conclude, that the muſtering up ſuch a

(u) Hieroſ. i. 3. c. 10. *(x)* Judg. i. 35. *(y) Pliny*, lib. viii. c. 16. *(z)* Apud Vopiſ. in Probo.
(a) Calmet's Commentary in Judg. xxv.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

Number of *Foxes*, in order to burn up the *Philiſtines* Corn, was neither a fooliſh nor impracticable Thing, ſuppoſing *Samſon* was at Liberty to proſecute his Revenge in this Manner. But for his Righteouſneſs in this, and many of his other Proceedings we are (as we ſaid before) no ways accountable, unleſs his being conſider'd as a *Chief* among the *Iſraelites* (whom God had rais'd up to annoy the *Philiſtines*, and in ſuch Methods as this, rather than *open War*, to weaken them by his perſonal Valour and Strength) may be admitted in Juſtification of what he did. But to proceed.

Wherein lay Samſon's great Strength.

(b) Whether *Samſon*'s Hair was the *phyſical*, or only *moral* Cauſe of his Strength, needs not, I think, be made any Queſtion. For, tho' Plenty of Hair may be ſome Indication of bodily Strength, yet ſince he, that is naturally ſtrong, becomes not leſs *ſo*, by having his Hair cut off, (tho' this was certainly the Caſe of *Samſon*) it muſt neceſſarily follow, that his Hair was no *natural* Cauſe of his Strength, but that it was a ſupernatural and miraculous Gift, not *(c)* perhaps always inherent in him, but only diſpens'd at certain Times, when the *Spirit of God came upon him*. *(d)* It depended indeed on the Covenant made between God and him, the Sign of which Covenant was his *Hair*; and therefore when, in Compliance to his Harlot, he ſuffer'd his Hair to be cut off, he broke the Covenant with God, and forfeiting the *Spirit* of Strength and Courage, was left to his own natural Weakneſs, and ſo became an eaſy Prey to his Enemies. But having been now a conſiderable Time in Priſon, wherein he was cruelly us'd, he began to repent (no doubt) of his Folly; and therefore making fervent Supplications to God for Pardon of the Violation of his *Nazaritiſm*, he renew'd his Vow, and ſo, being reſtor'd to the Condition he was in before he loſt the Favour of God, his Strength began to grow and increaſe, in Proportion as his Hair did.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

When his Hair was thus grown, and his Strength return'd, it is made a Queſtion, whether the *Houſe*, (as it is called in Scripture) which he pulled down, was the Temple of *Dagon*, for whoſe Honour this *Feſtival* was appointed, or ſome other Edifice?

That it was not a common Houſe, is evident from the Multitude of the People, which it contain'd; and tho' the Temples of the *Philiſtines* are ſuppos'd *(e)* by ſome to have been of the ſame Figure and Make, with thoſe in *Egypt*, i. e. a Kind of a *Rotunda*, flat-roof'd, with a large Portico without, and Pillars within to ſuſtain the Building; yet this ſeems to be no more than a Fiction, devoid of all Authority, and accommodated to the Purpoſe of ſolving this Difficulty. 'Tis not certain, that the *Egyptian* Temples were built in this Manner, and much more probable it is, that this *Houſe* of their famous God *Dagon* was made of Stone; and tho' it wanted no proper Supports, yet it is ſcarce ſuppoſable, that in a Structure of this Kind its whole Weight ſhould be ſupported by two Pillars only, and theſe ſo very contiguous, that *Samſon* could lay hold on them both at one Time.

The Form of the Houſe, which Samſon pull'd down.

The moſt general Opinion therefore is, that this was a Structure, which the *Philiſtines* made uſe of, (upon ſuch Occaſions as this) built all of Wood, and ſupported by wooden Pillars, in the Form of the *Theatres*, which, in After-Times, were in great Requeſt among the *Romans*. Towards the Middle of this Building, we may ſuppoſe that there were two large Beams, upon which the Weight of the whole Structure lay; and that theſe Beams were ſupported by two Pillars, which ſtood in a Manner contiguous to each other. So that, as ſoon as *Samſon* had mov'd and unſettled *theſe*, down muſt the *Principals*, and, with them, the whole Building, come. The only remaining Difficulty is, how a Building, made of Wood, and ſupported by two Pillars only, ſhould be able

(b) Calmet's Dictionary, under the Word *Samſon*. *(c) Patrick*'s Commentary. *(d) Collier*'s Introduction. *(e) Calmet*'s Commentary.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1413, &c.

able to contain ſuch a Multitude of Men and Women? But whoever reads * *Pliny*'s *Natural Hiſtory*, will therein find a Deſcription of two *Theatres*, built by *Curio*, capable of containing a much greater Number of People, than the *Philiſtines* are here ſaid to be, and yet (what was a Wonder much greater, than the two Pillars here) whenever they were turn'd round, (as they frequently were) to meet and make one *Amphitheatre*, they both reſted upon one *Hinge* only, which, had it happen'd to ſlip, muſt have occaſion'd (as our Author tells us) a much greater Slaughter, than what was at the Battle of *Cannæ*; as, by the actual Fall of an Amphitheatre, built by *Atilius*, no fewer than fifty Thouſand Perſons (as * *Tacitus* relates the Story) were kill'd, wounded, and maim'd: Which is enough, one would think, to ſilence the Cavils of thoſe, who are apt to fancy that a Building of ſuch a Capacity could not be ſo contriv'd, as to rely only on two *Supporters*.

Other Exceptions concerning Samſon.

AND indeed all the other Exceptions, which are uſually made to *Samſon*'s Character and Conduct, are, in Effect, no more, than mere *Cavils*, which ariſe, in a great Meaſure, from an Unacquaintedneſs with the *Idiom* of the *Hebrew* Tongue. For as, when in *Jotham*'s Parable, *Wine* is ſaid *(f) to cheer both God and Man*; the Words *Elohim*, and *Anaſhim*, may ſignify as well *high* and *low*, *Princes* and *Peaſants*, i. e. all Conditions of Men do find themſelves cheer'd and refreſh'd with Wine; ſo, when it is ſaid, that *(g) the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon Samſon*, we are not to underſtand thereby, that he had any *Grace* extraordinary, or ſanctifying Influences of the bleſſed Spirit communicated to him, but only, that he was endu'd with wonderful Courage and Fortitude, an undaunted Mind, and a *ſupernatural* Strength of the Body at ſuch and ſuch Times, which enabled him to do *great Acts*, but made no Alteration in his *Manners*. And, in like Manner, when he is ſaid to *(h)* have *judged Iſrael twenty Years*, we need not infer, that he was the ſupreme *Magiſtrate* in the *Republick*, (for that very probably was *Eli*) but only, that he was the *chief* Man of War, whoſe Valour was renown'd, and who did many great and ſignal Exploits, in order to reſcue his Countrymen from the Oppreſſion of their Enemies, and to reſtore them to their former Liberty. I ſay, *in order to* this, for he did not *perfect* their Deliverance; only, by the ſeveral Defeats which he gave them, and the great Damages he did them, he infus'd into the *Iſraelites* ſuch a Spirit and Reſolution, that, not many Years after, they took up Arms, and appearing in the Field againſt them, defeated, and ſubdu'd them; ſo that, in all the Days of *Samuel*, we hear of no farther Moleſtation from that *Quarter*.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

Why the Judges did not aboliſh Idolatry.

THE Scripture however furniſhes us with a Reaſon why *Idolatry* was not aboliſh'd, and a thorough *Reformation* of Religion eſtabliſh'd, during this Period: For

* The Words of *Pliny*, upon this Occaſion, are ſo very remarkable, that I thought it not improper to quote them. "Theatra duo juxta fecit ampliſſima è ligno, Cardinum ſingulorum verſatili ſuſpenſa Libramento; in quibus utriſque "Antemeridiano Ludorum Spectaculo edito inter ſeſe averſis, ne invicem obſtreperent Scenæ; & repentè circumactis, "ut contra ſtarent; poſtremo jam die, diſcendentibus Tabulis, & cornibus inter ſe cocuntibus, faciebat Amphithea-"trum, & Gladiatorum Spectacula edebat, ipſum magis auctoratum populum Romanum circumferens. Quid enim "miretur quiſque in hoc primum? Inventorem, an Inventum? Artificem, an Auctorem? Auſum aliquem hoc excogitare, an ſuſcipere? parere, an jubere? Super omnia erat populi furor, ſedere auſi tum infidâ inſtabilique Sede—— "perituri momento aliquo, laxatis Machinis. Lib. xxxvi. c. 15.

* The Fall of this Amphitheatre *Tacitus* relates in theſe Words: "M. Licinio, L. Calpurnio Coſſ ingentium Bel-"lorum Cladem æquavit malum improviſum. Ejus Initium ſimul & Finis exſtitit. Nam, cœpto apud Fidenas Am-"phitheatro, Atilius, quidam libertini generis, quo ſpectaculum Gladiatorum celebraret, neque Fundamenta per "ſolidum ſubdidit, neque firmis nexibus Ligneam compagem ſuperſtruxit, ut qui non abundant à Pecuniæ, nec mu-"nicipali ambitione, ſed in ſordidâ mercede id negotium quæſiviſſet. Adfluxere avidi talium, Imperitante Tiberio, "procul Voluptatibus habiti, virilis & muliebris ſexûs omnis Ætas, ob propinquitatem loci effuſiùs, unde gravior "peſtis fuit, confertâ mole, dein convulsâ, dum ruit intus, atque in exteriora effunditur, immenſamque vim mor-"talium, ſpectaculo intentos, aut qui circum adſtabant, in præceps trahit, atque operit———Quinquaginta ho-"minum millia eo Caſu debilitata, vel obruta ſunt." Annal. lib. vi. c. 62.

(*f*) Judg. ix. 13. (*g*) Ibid. xiv. 6. (*h*) Ibid. xvi. 31.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1443 &c.

For it tells us, that *(i) in theſe Days*, viz between the Death of *Joſhua*, and the firſt Inſtitution of the *Judges*, *there was no King*, i. e. no chief Ruler or Magiſtrate (for the *regal* Authority did not as yet begin) in *Iſrael*, *but every one did that which was right in his own Eyes*; ſo that conſidering the natural Propenſity of the People to Idolatry, and the Want of a ſupreme Power lodg'd in ſome one's Hand to controul them, we need not wonder, that, before the Inſtitution of *Judges*, they fell into the like Practices, with the Nations among whom they liv'd.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

The *Judges* indeed were inveſted with Authority to ſuppreſs theſe Practices; but then we are to conſider, that few or none of them had a Juriſdiction over the whole Land of *Iſrael*, but were only Rulers of ſome particular *Cantons*, which they undertook to deliver from imminent Danger; and therefore how zealous ſoever they might be for a Reformation, yet ſince their Authority was not of ſufficient Extenſion, the Wonder is not great, that *(k)* Idolatry ſhould ſtill be practis'd in ſome dark Corners of the Land, and that in the Tribe of *Dan* (which was ſo far diſtant) *there ſhould be ſet up* Micah's *graven Images*, *which he made*, *all the Time that the Ark of the Lord was at* Shiloh.

SHILOH indeed was ſo far diſtant from ſeveral Parts of the Land of *Canaan*, that People began to account it too much Trouble to go up thither, to pay their Vows and Oblations, and therefore bethought themſelves of ſetting up private *Chapels*, wherein (as they ſuppos'd,) they might ſerve God as well; and, in the Inſtitution of theſe, being left to their own Fancies, they generally intermix'd ſome idolatrous Practices, and, partly in Imitation of the *Cherubims* at *Shiloh*, and the *Teraphims* among their heathen Neighbours, choſe to worſhip God through ſome viſible Repreſentation, which, by one Means or other, was carry'd on in Time to direct Idolatry.

The *Moabites*, we know, even when the *Iſraelites* were in a State of Independency, and had Reaſon ſufficient to have a jealous Eye over them, by their Arts and Contrivances drew them into the Worſhip of their God *Baal peor*; and much more might the Nations, to whom they were now in Subjection, ſucceed in their Attempts, either of recommending, or (if Need requir'd it) of forcing their Religion upon them: So that it was not to be wonder'd at, if Things ran into ſuch Diſorder when there was (if not a total Diſſolution) at leaſt a grievous Relaxation of Government; when ſome of the Governors themſelves were far from being the beſt of Men; and, through Inclination, Intreaty, or Compulſion, the People were ſo liable, upon many Occaſions, to relapſe into Idolatry.

Micah's *Teraphim*, and his Intent in ſetting it up.

What *Micah*'s Intention might be in ſetting up a *Teraphim*, and other Kind of *Images* in his *Houſe*, *Commentators* are not ſo well agreed. Thoſe that are willing to apologize for the Thing, are ready to ſay, *(l)* that, as he liv'd in a Time of great Trouble and Confuſion, wherein the *publick* Worſhip of God was much neglected, if not totally diſus'd, his Deſign was to erect a Kind of *domeſtick Tabernacle*, wherein he might ſerve God in *private*, ſince he could not, without much Difficulty, do it in *publick*; and that the ſacred Habiliments he made, his Ephod, his Teraphim, *&c.* were no more, than what he had ſeen at *Shiloh:* But ſince the Laws of God condemn *(m)* the making Images of any Kind, as Objects of Adoration; the ſetting up any religious Worſhip, different from what he had eſtabliſh'd; the offering Sacrifices, or *(n)* performing any publick Service any where, but in the Tabernacle; and the employing any Prieſts in his Worſhip but ſuch as were of the Race of *Aaron*; 'tis certain that *Micah* was guilty of a Violation of all theſe Prohibitions, and, in the Matter of theſe *graven* and *molten* Images, cannot be excus'd from the Crime of Idolatry.

And

(i) Judg. xvii. 6. (k) Ibid. xviii. 3. (l) *Calmet*'s Commentary. (m) Exod. xx. 4 and xxxiv. 17. Deut. iv. 15, 16. (n) Lev. xvii. 8. and Deut. xii. 14.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

AND indeed, unleſs he intended to patronize *that*, what Reaſon could he have to make any Innovations in Religion, ſince (according as we date this Action) either *Phineas*, or *Eli* were then in the High-Prieſt's Office, at *Shiloh*, where the publick Worſhip was preſerv'd in all its *Formality*, and from whence *Micah*, who liv'd in the Mountains of *Ephraim*, was not ſo very diſtant, but that he might have gone thither, upon all ſolemn Occaſions?

The Anſwer to the Danites, *fictitious.*

THE Spirit of God therefore, in repeating the Admonition, that *in thoſe Days, there was no King in* Iſrael, *&c.* before it begins to relate this Story of *Micah*, ſeems to inſinuate, that this was a wicked and enormous Practice of his; that the Worſhip, he inſtituted, was *idolatrous*, and the Prieſt, he had procur'd to officiate, a *Renegado*: And if ſo, the Anſwer, this Prieſt receiv'd in Behalf of the *Danites*, and wherein he promis'd them the Succeſs they met with, muſt have proceeded from no good *Principle*, unleſs we ſuppoſe, (what ſeems indeed moſt reaſonable) that the *Levite* promis'd them Succeſs, (becauſe he was minded to pleaſe them) merely out of his own Head, tho', to give it a better Sanction, he might pretend to receive it from this fictitious Oracle. In this Caſe, there was no Occaſion of having Recourſe to any Oracle whatever; becauſe any Man of a moderate Foreſight, conſidering the undaunted Courage and Valour of the *Danites*, and the ſupine Negligence and Cowardice of the People of *Laiſh*, (if once they came to Action) might, without the *Spirit of Prophecy*, foretel the Event.

THE Directions, which God gave *Moſes* concerning *Joſhua*'s conſulting the divine Oracle, are conceiv'd in theſe Words; —— *(o) He ſhall ſtand before* Eleazar, *the Prieſt, who ſhall aſk Counſel for him, after the Judgment of* Urim, *before the Lord; at his Word ſhall they go out, and at his Word ſhall they come in, both he and all the Children of* Iſrael *with him, even all the Congregation.* In all the Book of *Joſhua* indeed we do not find, that he had this conſtant Recourſe to the Oracle, *(p)* and from hence, ſome *Jewiſh* Doctors conclude, that he was bound to do this only at the firſt Entrance upon his Office, to demonſtrate to the People that he was *Moſes*'s Succeſſor; but that afterwards the Spirit of *Propheſy* reſted upon him, ſo that he knew how to conduct all publick Affairs without having Occaſion for this oracular Advice. *Moſes* we know made no Uſe of the *Urim* and *Thummim*, to conſult God by the Mediation of the High-Prieſt; he went immediately and directly to God himſelf: But we do not read that *Joſhua* was admitted to ſuch Familiarity, nor had he ſuch frequent Revelations from God, as his Predeceſſor had. And therefore, as God was pleas'd, in Supply of that Defect, to remit him to this Method of conſulting him; we cannot but think, that upon every momentous Occaſion, eſpecially in the weighty Affairs of War, he was always careful to purſue it: And therefore the Words, in the Beginning of *Judges*, *Now, after the Death of* Joſhua, *the Children of* Iſrael *aſked of the Lord, ſaying, who ſhall go up for us againſt the* Canaanites? do not import, that they never conſulted God by Way of *Urim* and *Thummim*, during the Life of *Joſhua*, but rather, that after the Death of ſo great a Commander, they were at a Stand what to do, nor would they adventure to proceed in the War of *Canaan*, without following the ſame Directions, which were given to *Joſhua*, and which he had ſo long purſu'd with ſo good Succeſs.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

NAY, the conſulting of the divine Oracle, eſpecially in Matters of War, was accounted ſo very neceſſary, in order to obtain Succeſs, that ſome Commentators have eſteem'd this the only Reaſon, why the *Iſraelites*, in ſo juſt a Cauſe as puniſhing the *Benjamites*, for their *unheard-of* Wickedneſſes, were, in two ſeveral Battles, defeated; even becauſe they did not previouſly apply to God, as they ſhould have done. *(q) They ſent up* indeed *to the Houſe*

(o) Numb. xxvii. 21. *(p)* Vid. *Patrick*'s Commentary in Locum. *(q)* Judg. xx. 18.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

of the Lord, and aſked Counſel of him, and ſaid, which of us ſhall go up firſt to the Battle againſt the Children of Benjamin? *i. e.* which of their Tribes ſhould have the Honour or Hazard of making the firſt Attack: *(r)* But it is obſervable, that they had come to a full Reſolution of making War againſt the *Benjamites*, and, to that Purpoſe, had made *Draughts* of the Men that were to be employ'd in it, without ever conſulting God, whether an Enterpriſe of this Nature, wherein there was likely to be ſuch an Effuſion of the Blood of their Brethren, would be pleaſing to him, or no. *(s)* The Truth is, they never queſtion'd his Approbation of what they accounted ſo laudable: They preſum'd upon his Protection and Aſſiſtance; and the vaſt Superiority of their Forces made them confident of Succeſs. But now, in a Matter of ſuch Moment as this, to overlook the divine Oracle, and be determin'd by their own Counſels only, and to march againſt one of their own Tribes, with a full Purpoſe of deſtroying them utterly, before they knew any Thing whether God had decreed their Deſtruction, or no, was not only an Inſtance of their Raſhneſs and Preſumption, but an Act likewiſe of *Rebellion* againſt the Majeſty of God, who was the King of *Iſrael*, and, upon that Account alone, had Right to declare, whether they were to wage War againſt their Brethren the *Benjamites*, or no.

Why the Iſraelites *were ſo ſevere upon the* Benjamites.

But, ſuppoſing, that the Grounds of the War were juſtifiable, and God conſenting to it, yet, why might not he take the Opportunity of puniſhing the *Iſraelites*, by Means of the *Benjamites*, for their tame Permiſſion of Crimes more enormous, than what they had now taken into their Heads to chaſtize; *(t)* for ſuffering *ſpiritual* Adultery among them, even while they were ſo hot upon puniſhing *carnal*?

The Laws, which God gave the *Iſraelites* againſt the Sin of Idolatry, were ſo very ſevere, that, whoever did but ſo much as entice another to the Commiſſion of it, was to loſe all Title to Pity and Compaſſion, tho' he was never ſo dear a Friend, never ſo near a Relation: *(u) Thine Eye ſhall not pity him, neither ſhalt thou ſpare, neither ſhalt thou conceal him, but thou ſhalt ſurely kill him; thy Hand ſhalt be firſt upon him to put him to Death, and afterwards the Hands of all the People.* But now, in the Caſe of *Micah*, and the whole Tribe of *Dan*, who had notoriouſly fallen into Idolatry, the Rulers of *Iſrael* were ſo far from putting this Law in Execution, that they conniv'd at their Apoſtacy: And therefore God took Occaſion, from this Quarrel between the other Tribes and that of *Benjamin*, to make uſe of the *latter*, as Scourges to puniſh this baſe Connivance of the former; and, after he had twice employ'd them to this Purpoſe, he inverted the Fate of the War, and, in ſo doing, made the confederate Army of *Iſrael* the Inſtruments of that terrible Vengeance, which he took upon the *Benjamites*, in the Puniſhment of their execrable Lewdneſs. For this is the wonderful Wiſdom of God's Providence, to employ the Paſſions of Men to his Purpoſes, and to make one wicked Set of People the Inſtruments of his puniſhing another, even as he expreſſes himſelf in another Caſe, that, in ſome Meaſure, is not incongruous to this: —— *(x) Woe unto the* Aſſyrian, *the Rod of mine Anger, and the Staff in their Hand, is mine Indignation.* —— *Againſt the People of my Wrath will I give him Charge to take the Spoil, and to take the Prey, and to tread them down like the Mire in the Streets.* —— *Howbeit he meaneth not ſo, neither doth his Heart think ſo; but it is in his Heart to deſtroy, and to cut off Nations not a few.* —— *Wherefore it ſhall come to paſs, that when the Lord hath performed his whole Work upon Mount* Sion, *and on* Jeruſalem, *I will puniſh the Fruit of the ſtout Heart of the King of* Aſſyria, *and the Glory of his high Looks*; and, in like Manner here, when, by the Hand of the *Benjamites*, he had chaſtiz'd the reſt of the

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

(r) *Calmet*'s Commentary ſur Juges, c. xx. (s) *Saurin*'s Diſſ. Vol. IV. Diſſert. 18. (t) *Patrick*'s Commentary on Judg. xx. (u) Deut. xiii. 8, 9. (x) Iſaiah x. 5, &c.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

the *Iſraelites*, by the Hand of the *Iſraelites*, he puniſh'd the *Benjamites* for their groſs Impieties, making uſe of their reſpective Paſſions, and furious Reſentments, to accompliſh his Will; albeit *they meant it not ſo, neither did their Heart think ſo; but it was* only *in their Hearts to deſtroy, and cut off* one another.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

WHEN the Heat of their Fury however was abated, and the *Iſraelites* began to look back with a little Coolneſs upon what they had done; how they had almoſt totally deſtroy'd one Tribe of their Brethren, and bound themſelves by an Oath never to marry their Daughters to any of the poor Remains of it, (which could not but prove the Extirpation of the whole) the Joy and Triumph of their late Victory was turn'd into Mourning and bitter Lamentation.

The Unlawfulneſs of their Oath.

WHETHER this Oath, againſt contracting any Affinity with the *Benjamites*, was in itſelf lawful, and obligatory, or no, (y) ſome Interpreters, without any Manner of Reaſon, as I think, have diſputed. For, whatever was attended with ſuch pernicious Conſequences, as to oblige their Brethren, either to live unmarry'd, which would prove the Extinction of their Tribe, or to marry the Daughters of *Heathens*, which was contrary to their divine Law, or to take to themſelves Wives wherever they could find them by Force and Violence, which was contrary to the univerſal Law of Nations: Whatever, I ſay, was attended with ſuch evil Conſequences as theſe, could not be lawful in itſelf, nor of any Obligation to the Conſciences of thoſe that made it; and therefore it is ſomewhat wonderful, how the *Iſraelites*, when they found themſelves involv'd in ſuch Difficulties, (as (z) they themſelves teſtify) that, for the Preſervation of this their Oath, they were forc'd to have Recourſe to Acts of the utmoſt Cruelty and Violence, did not perceive the Illegality of it, and themſelves, conſequently, abſolv'd from its Obſervation.

The Murder of the Jabeſhites.

IT is not the Intent of the ſacred Hiſtorian to relate Matters otherwiſe, than they happen'd; nor is it any Part of our Buſineſs, to apologize for Actions, that in themſelves are abominable, and will admit of no Excuſe. The Maſſacre of the People of *Jabeſh-gilead*, without ever ſending to know the Reaſon of their abſenting themſelves from the War, was a cruel Expedient to extricate the *Iſraelites* from a Difficulty, in which their ſuperſtitious Obſervance of an unlawful Oath had involv'd them; and a ſad Inſtance it is of the Iniquity and Barbarity of theſe Times: For, how ſevere ſoever the Laws of military Diſcipline may be, or with (a) what Juſtice ſoever *Recuſants*, as well as *Differters* in War may be deem'd guilty, and the *Jabeſhites* be call'd publick Enemies, becauſe they did not obey the Order of the *whole Congregation*, and by refuſing to join with them againſt the *Benjamites*, made themſelves Partakers of their Crimes; yet, certainly, to ſlay the Innocent with the Guilty, and to put Women and Children to Death, who were never made to bear Arms, was the very Height of Injuſtice and Barbarity. If it be ſaid that the *Cherem*, or the Sentence of utter Execration was paſs'd upon them, I do not ſee, with what Juſtice the Virgins could be ſpar'd, (as we find they were by a publick Decree) unleſs we ſuppoſe, that God, from the Tabernacle at *Shiloh*, (before which the *Iſraelites* were now aſſembled) ſignify'd his Intentions of *diſpenſing* with the full Execution of the Sentence by Reaſon of the publick Neceſſity.

The Rape of the Virgins at Shiloh, *not to be defended.*

AND indeed the publick Neceſſity is the only good Reaſon, that can be given for that other Act of Violence, the Rape of the Virgins at *Shiloh*. For, whatever may be ſaid in Vindication of the *Benjamites*, viz. that, what they put in Execution was by Order and Advice of their Superiors, and that their Intent in doing it was juſt and honeſt, and devoid of that brutal Luſt, which is incident to common *Raviſhers*; whatever may be ſaid in Excuſe of theſe, the Elders of *Iſrael*, who gave

(y) Vide *Calmet*'s Commentary. (z) Judg. xxi. 6, &c. (a) *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

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gave them this Counſel and Authority, had certainly no Right to diſpoſe of other People's Children without their Parents Conſent and Approbation.

* The Rape of the *Sabine Virgins* is uſually produc'd as a Piece of Hiſtory parallel to this; *(b)* but *Romulus*, in whoſe Reign it happen'd, was one of thoſe Princes, who accounted every Point, that contributed to the Eſtabliſhment of his Dominion, not only lawful, but glorious, and that every Thing ceas'd to be a Crime, when once it became neceſſary for *Reaſons of State:* But the Rulers of *Iſrael* either had, or ſhould have had different Notions. They were govern'd by God, *whoſe Throne is eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſs*, and ſhould therefore, one would think, have contriv'd ſome other Means of re-eſtabliſhing a diminiſh'd Tribe, than thoſe violent Ways of Rapes and forc'd Marriages. But the ſacred Hiſtorian has aſſign'd a Reaſon for theſe unrighteous Proceedings, when (in *(c)* four different Places in the Book of *Judges)* he tells us, that *in thoſe Days there was no King in Iſrael*; and, *(d)* for Want of ſuch a ſupreme Authority, every Tribe, and every City, nay, which is more, every private Man committed many horrid Things, which were not publickly allow'd. This *(e)* was the Cauſe of *Micah*'s Idolatry, as we noted before; of the *Benjamites* Filthineſs and abominable Luſts; and of all the enormous Things done by the main Body of the *Iſraelites*; their killing all the *Benjamites* without Diſtinction; their binding themſelves by raſh and unlawful Oaths; their killing all the Women of *Jabeſh-gilead*, who were not Virgins; and here, their permitting, nay, their ordering this Rape for the Preſervation of a raſh and unjuſtifiable Oath: And this ſhould teach us, to be very thankful for the Authority, that is ſet over us, in order to preſerve us from the Commiſſions of ſuch like Enormities; for which End, the Cuſtom was, among the antient *Perſians*, (as our learned *Uſher* obſerves) to let the People looſe to do even what they liſted, for five Days after their King died; that, by the Diſorders, which were then committed, they might ſee the Neceſſity of having a King to govern them, and, when one was ſettled in the Throne, the great Reaſon of being obedient to him.

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Heathen Teſtimonies, to corroborate this Part of the Hiſtory.

Thus we have endeavour'd to clear up moſt of the Paſſages, in the Book of *Judges*, which ſeem to imply any Inconſiſtency, or Incredibility, during this Period: And, if any *Heathen* Teſtimonies may be thought a farther Confirmation of their Truth, we may ſay, that the ſeeming Incongruity of *Shamgar*'s ſlaying ſo many *Philiſtines* with the Ox-Goad is mightily abated, by what is

* This Piece of Hiſtory we find thus related: "*Romulus*, perceiving that his new City was ſurrounded by ſeveral "very powerful and warlike Nations, who bore them no Good-Will, form'd a Deſign to make them his Friends, "by contracting Marriages with them: But conſidering with himſelf, that theſe neighbouring Nations would hardly "enter into that *Affinity* with a People, as yet famous neither for their Riches, nor great Exploits, without being in "ſome Meaſure compell'd into it; he was reſolv'd to put in Practice the *Stratagem* of his Uncle *Numitor*, and to "enter into this Alliance with them by carrying off their Daughters. This Deſign he communicated to the Senate; "and, having obtain'd their Approbation of it, he proclaim'd a publick *Feaſt* to be celebrated in Honour of *Neptune*, "and invited all the *neighbouring* Cities to the many Diverſions and *Spectacles*, which he then intended to exhibit. "Crowds of People, with their Wives and Children, flock'd to the Feaſt; but, on the laſt Day, when it began to "draw to a Concluſion, *Romulus* order'd all the young Men, that upon a Signal given, they ſhould ſeize and carry "off every one a Virgin, keep them all Night, without offering any Rudeneſs to them, and bring them, the next "Morning, before him. The young Men took care to execute his Orders: For, diſperſing themſelves into ſmall "Companies, as ſoon as they ſaw the Sign, they ſeiz'd on the Damſels, who, upon this Occaſion, made a hideous "Outcry, as expecting much worſe Uſage than they met with. The next Day, when they were brought before *Ro*-"*mulus*, he ſpoke very courteouſly to them, and told them, That it was to do them no *Diſhonour*, but merely to pro-"cure them Huſbands, that he order'd that *Rape*, which was an ancient Cuſtom deriv'd from the *Greeks*, and the "moſt noble and gallant Manner of contracting Marriage. He therefore intreated them to be well affected towards "thoſe Huſbands, which Fortune had given them; and ſo, diſtributing the young Women, which were ſix hundred "and eighty three, among an equal Number of unmarry'd Men, he diſmiſs'd them." *Dionyſ. Halicarn.* Antiq. Lib. ii. c. 21.

(b) Saurin's Diſſert. 18, Vol. IV. *(c)* Chap. xvii. 6. xviii. 1. xix. 1. and xxi. 25. *(d) Patrick*'s Commentary. *(e)* Ibid.

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is told of *Lycurgus*, viz. that he overthrew the Forces of *Bacchus* with the ſelf-ſame Weapon; that, from *Deborah*'s being a Propheteſs, a Governeſs, and dwelling upon a Mount, the Story of the *Thebean Sphinx* (as ſome learned Men imagine) was invented by the *Greeks*; that their *Hercules* was certainly the *Samſon* of ſacred Writ, his *Omphale* and *Dalilah* the ſame, and that his Pillars at *Cales* were of near Affinity with thoſe of *Gaza*; * that his fatal Locks gave Riſe to the Fable of *Niſus* King of *Megara*, upon whoſe Hair the Fortune of his Kingdom depended; that his Foxes were commemorated at *Rome*, every Return of their Harveſt, * by a ſimilar Ceremony of tying them Tail to Tail, and ſo letting them go; and, (to name no more) that *Jephthah*'s ſacrificing his Daughter to God is partly adumbrated by *Agamemnon*'s offering his *Iphigenia* to *Diana*, and partly by *Idomeneus*'s promiſing to make a Victim to *Neptune* of the firſt Thing he ſhould meet on Shore, (if he eſcap'd the preſent Storm) which happen'd to be his own Son. So happily do many Fictions of the Poets concur to confirm the Truth and Authority of Holy Writ.

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* The Story is thus told by *Ovid*. *Niſus* was beſieg'd by *Minos* in his capital City *Megara*. The Fate of that City, which was the Strength of his Kingdom, depended upon a certain Lock of red Hair, which was conceal'd under the reſt. The Siege had now been continu'd for ſix Months, when the Daughter of *Niſus*, who had frequent Opportunities of beholding her Father's Enemy *Minos*, from a Tower, that look'd into his Camp, was ſo taken with his goodly Mien and Deportment, that ſhe fell deſperately in Love with him. Her Love, and the Occaſion of it, the Poet has thus related.

——————Hac judice Minos,
Seu Caput abdiderat chriſtatâ Caſſide pennis,
In Galea firmoſus erat; ſeu ſumſerat auro
Fulgentem Clypeum, Clypeum ſumſiſſe decebat, &c.
Cùm verò Faciem dempto nudaverat ære,
Purpureuſque albi ſtratis inſignia pictis
Terga premebat Equi, ſpumantiaque ora regebat;
Vix ſua, Vix ſanæ virgo Niſeïa compos
Mentis erat: Felix jaculum, quod tangeret ille,
Quæque manu premeret, felicia fræna vocabat. Metamor. Lib. viii.

The Reſult of this Paſſion was, that this perfidious Daughter ſtole into the Chamber, while her Father was faſt aſleep, cut off the Lock, whereon the Fate of his Kingdom depended, and carry'd it to *Minos*, as an undoubted Pledge of her Love. But if this Fable and *Samſon*'s Hiſtory have a near Reſemblance in ſome of their firſt Circumſtances, they are very different in the Concluſion: For *Minos* rejected the Preſent with Scorn, and ſlighted the Woman, becauſe of her Perfidy; whereas the Princes of the *Philiſtines* took the Advantage againſt *Samſon*, which *Dalilah*'s Treachery gave them. *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 17.

* There was anciently a *Feaſt* in *Rome*, called *Vulpinalia*, or the *Feaſt of the Foxes*, which *Ovid* makes mention of. For, enquiring into the Cuſtom of tying lighted Torches to their Tails,

Cur igitur miſſæ vinctis ardentia tædis
Terga ferant vulpes, cauſa docenda mihi.

he reſolves the Matter, by telling us, that a certain Youth, having caught a Fox, which had deſtroy'd much Poultry, was going to burn it. His Words are theſe:

Captivam ſtipulâ Fœnoque involvit, & ignes
Admovet: urentes effugit illa manus.
Quâ fugit, incendit veſtitos meſſibus agros,
Damnoſis vires ignibus Aura dabat.
Factum abiit: monumenta manent: nam vivere captam
Nunc quoque Lex vulpem Carſeolana vetat.
Utque luat pœnas Gens hæc, Cerealibus ardet,
Quoque modo Segetes perdidit, ipſa perit. Faſtorum, Lib. iv.

But *Bochart* has confuted this Notion of *Ovid*'s, concerning the Origin of this Cuſtom, and endeavours to refer it to this Piece of Hiſtory in *Samſon*'s Life. *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 17.

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DISSERTATION II.

JEPHTHAH's *Raſh Vow.*

The State of the Queſtion.

THIS Vow of *Jephthah*'s, which has employ'd the Thoughts and Pens of ſo many learned Men, is conceiv'd in theſe Words: ——*And* Jephthah *vowed a Vow unto the Lord, and ſaid, if thou ſhalt without fail, deliver the Children of* Ammon *into my Hands, then it ſhall be, that whatſoever cometh forth out of the Door of my Houſe to meet me, when I return in Peace from the Children of* Ammon, *ſhall ſurely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a Burnt-Offering.* And the Reſult of this Vow was, ——*That* Jephthah *paſſed over unto the Children of* Ammon *to fight againſt them, and the Lord delivered them into his Hands*; whereupon *he came to* Mizpeh *unto his Houſe, and behold, his Daughter came out to meet him, with Timbrels, and Dances, and ſhe was his only Child, beſides her he had neither Son nor Daughter. And it came to paſs, when he ſaw her, that he rent his Cloaths, and ſaid, Alas! thou haſt brought me very low, and thou art one of them, that trouble me; for I have opened my Mouth to the Lord, and I cannot go back. And ſhe ſaid unto him, My Father, if thou haſt opened thy Mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that, which proceeded out of thy Mouth, foraſmuch as the Lord has taken Vengeance for thee of thine Enemies, even of the Children of* Ammon: *Only let me alone two Months, that I may go up and down upon the Mountains, and bewail my Virginity, I, and my Fellows. And he ſaid, go; and he ſent her away for two Months, and ſhe went with her Companions, and bewailed her Virginity upon the Mountains. And it came to paſs, at the End of two Months, that ſhe returned to her Father, who did with her according to his Vow, which he had vowed, and ſhe knew no Man: And it was a Cuſtom in* Iſrael, *that the Daughters of* Iſrael *went yearly to lament the Daughter of* Jephthah, *four Days in a Year.* I ſet the whole Paſſage before the Reader, that he may the better judge of the depending Controverſy; for a great Controverſy there is among *Commentators*, whether this Daughter of *Jephthah*'s was really ſacrific'd, or no: And for his farther Satisfaction in this Point, I will fairly ſtate the Arguments on both Sides; conſider a little on which Side they preponderate; and then enquire, in Caſe he did ſacrifice his Daughter, or (as others will have it) devote her only to God's Service in a ſingle Life, whether the Thing was *lawful* for him to do, and what might poſſibly be the *Motive* of his doing it.

Arguments for the Negative.

THOSE, *(f)* who maintain the *Negative*, or more merciful Side of the Queſtion, argue in this Manner: ——That *Jephthah* was certainly a very good Man, becauſe we find him rank'd among the *Worthies* of old, that are commemorated with Honour by the Author of the *Hebrews*; That he was an *Iſraelite*, and, as ſuch, liv'd under the Law, which prohibited *human* Sacrifices by the ſevereſt Penalties; That had the Vow been intended in this Senſe, God would never have vouchſaf'd *Jephthah* ſo ſignal a Victory, as he did, which muſt have terminated in the Violation of his own Laws; and therefore they conclude, that ſo kind and tender a Father, as *Jephthah* is repreſented, would never have ſacrific'd an innocent, dutiful, and obedient Child, as her whole Carriage ſeems to denote her, in Diſcharge of a raſh and inconſiderate Vow; eſpecially, when, according to the Preſcription of the Law, he might have redeem'd his Daughter at a Price ſo inconſiderable, *(g) as ten Shekels of Silver.*

IT muſt be ſomething elſe therefore, *ſay they*, that *Jephthah* did unto his Daughter,

(f) *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries. *Jenkins*'s Reaſonableneſs, Vol. II. c. 18. *Selden*, de Jure Nat. & Gent. lib. iv. c. 11. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, &c. (g) Lev. xxvii. 5.

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ter, and that (according to the Import of the Text) was, to devote her to a State of *Celibacy*, or that ſhe might live in the Manner of a religious *Nun* all the Days of her Life: For the Particle *Vah*, which we render AND *(it ſhall ſurely be the Lord's*, AND *I will offer it up)* is a *Disjunctive* in this Place, (as it is elſewhere) and ſignifies OR; ſo that the true Verſion of the Paſſage ſhould be, *whatever cometh forth to meet me ſhall ſurely be the Lord's*, OR *I will offer it up for a Burnt-Offering*, i. e. if it be an human Creature, I will dedicate it to the Service of God; if a Beaſt, of any Kind proper for Sacrifice, I will inſtantly offer it up: For that in this Senſe the Vow is to be underſtood, is evident, from her going into the Mountains *to bewail her Virginity*, which, had ſhe been doom'd to be ſacrific'd, had not been near ſo proper, as to bewail her *untimely End*. Nor can we think that *Jephthah* would have ever ſuffer'd her to have made a Circuit of two Months among her Companions, for fear of making her Eſcape, or procuring ſome of her Friends and Acquaintance either to reſcue her, or intercede for her, had ſhe been deſtin'd to ſuffer Death upon her Return.

ON the contrary, when ſhe return'd to her Father, and *he had done to her according to his Vow*, it immediately follows, that *ſhe knew not Man*, which ſhews that the Purpoſe of his Vow was anſwer'd by obliging her to a State of perpetual Virginity, in ſome retir'd Place, where ſhe was ſecluded from all Society, except that the *Daughters of Iſrael* (thoſe eſpecially of her Acquaintance) went up, either to talk and converſe with her, or to celebrate her Praiſe, or to comfort her concerning her ſolitary Condition, (for to all theſe Senſes may the Word *Letannoth* be apply'd) *four Days in the Year*, i. e. one Day every Quarter.

UPON the whole therefore they infer, that *Jephthah*'s Daughter did not fall a Sacrifice, but was conſecrated to God and his Service, *i. e.* devoted to a ſingle Life, and to remain a *Recluſe* all her Days; which could not but occaſion *Jephthah* no ſmall Grief and Trouble, becauſe by this Means his Family became extinct, and himſelf deſtitute of Iſſue to inherit his Eſtate, and perpetuate his Name. From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

THESE are ſome of the moſt plauſible Arguments, that are generally employ'd to prove, not the Sacrifice of *Jephthah*'s Daughter, but only her Obligation to a perpetual Virginity in the Worſhip and Service of God.

THOSE, *(h)* that maintain the *Affirmative*, or harſher Side of the Queſtion, *viz.* that *Jephthah*, in Purſuance to his Vow, did actually ſacrifice his Daughter, form their Arguments in this Manner:——*(i)* That the Times, wherein *Jephthah* liv'd, were ſo ſadly addicted to Idolatry, that *(k) to burn their Sons and Daughters in the Fire to their Gods* was a common Practice among the *Iſraelites*, as well as other Nations; and that the Manner, *(l)* in which he liv'd, (before he was call'd to the Aſſiſtance of his Country) which was chiefly by Plunder and Rapine, and Bloodſhed, might make him not incapable of vowing to ſacrifice the firſt of his *Domeſticks*, that ſhould meet him upon his victorious Return: That this Vow is deliver'd in *general* and *indefinite* Terms, *viz.* that *whatſoever ſhould come forth of the Doors of his Houſe to meet him*, That ſhould *ſurely be the Lord's*, and it ſhould be the Lord's, *by being offered up for a Burnt-Offering:* That, tho' the Particle *Vah* be ſometimes us'd in a *disjunctive* Senſe, yet it can only be ſo, where Things are really diſtinct and different from each other, but cannot be admitted, where the one manifeſtly includes the other, as it is in the Paſſage before us; that therefore it is much more congruous to all the Rules of good Senſe to underſtand the Words of *Jephthah* ſo, as that, by promiſing *whatſoever he met ſhould be the Lord's*, he oblig'd himſelf in general to conſecrate it to God, and that, by promiſing farther, that *he would offer it up for a Burnt-Offering*, *And for the* Affirmative.

(*h*) *Edwards*'s Enquiry into ſome remarkable Texts. (*i*) Deut. xii. 31. (*k*) *Saurin*, Vol. III. Diſſert. 15. (*l*) *Grotius* in Locum, *Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur le Vœu de Japhet, & *Saurin*, de eodem, &c.

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Offering, he ſpecify'd the Manner, in which he intended to make his Conſecration.

Vows of perpetual Virginity, *ſay they*, are Inſtitutions of a modern Date: The Word of God knows nothing of them; nor has this pretended Celibacy of *Jephthah*'s Daughter any Manner of Foundation in Scripture; and therefore, when this Circumſtance is inſerted, that *ſhe knew no Man*, it is not to ſignify, that ſhe liv'd a perpetual Virgin, but only, that ſhe was ſo unhappy, as to leave the World in her Youth, and before ſhe had the Knowledge of a Man.

Had *Jepthah* meant no more, *ſay they*, by performing his Vow, than conſecrating his Daughter, as a perpetual Virgin, to the Service of God, what Cauſe was there for *renting his Cloaths*, and bemoaning himſelf, as we find he did? Had *Jephthah* made only a Vow of *Celibacy* for his Daughter, whereby ſhe was bound to nothing more painful, than to lead a ſingle Life, what Reaſon was there for bewailing *this*, as a grievous Calamity, which ſome Men account a Thing ſo eminently glorious and honourable? Is the being ſhut up as a *Recluſe*, and enter'd into the Liſt of perpetual Virgins, a Matter of ſuch bitter Complaint and Lamentation? Was this ſo ſore an Evil, an Affliction ſo extraordinary, that, not only before ſhe underwent it, ſhe and her Companions, ſhould, for two Months together, be allow'd to bewail it; but that, after ſhe had undergone it, the *Daughters of* Iſrael ſhould be requir'd to *lament it four Times a Year? (m)* If ſhe was *actually* put to Death, in Execution of her Father's Vow, it is eaſy then to underſtand, why the particular Circumſtance of her dying without Iſſue (when *ſhe was the only Daughter of her Father*, and had no other Proſpect of Poſterity to keep up his Family) ſhould be repreſented as a ſore Aggravation of her violent and untimely Death: But it ſeems very difficult to account for that bitter Lamentation, made by her Father, by herſelf, by her Companions, and by all the Daughters of *Iſrael* in ſucceeding Times, if ſhe ſuffer'd no other, no ſeverer Puniſhment, than that of being devoted to *a ſingle Life*. From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

These are ſome of the moſt prevailing Arguments on the *affirmative* Side; and, for the Confirmation of them, it is farther alledg'd, that both *Joſephus*, and the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt teſtify the ſame Thing; that the Ancient Doctors, both of the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Church, were of the ſame Opinion; and that, as to the Subſtance of the Fact, the Compilers of the *Homilies* of our Church do perfectly agree with theſe ancient Writers: So that, how deſirous ſoever we may be to clear *Jephthah* from the Imputation of ſo cruel, ſo impious, ſo unnatural an Act, as that of murthering his own Daughter; yet, if we will adhere to the more eaſy and obvious Conſtruction of the Words, and as they appear to us at firſt View; or if we retain any juſt Eſteem and Veneration for the Senſe of Antiquity, we muſt neceſſarily conclude, that, when it is ſaid of him, that *he did with his Daughter according to the Vow, which he had vowed*, the Meaning can be no leſs, than that he did really put her to Death: But whether he acted well or ill in ſo doing, is another Enquiry we are now to purſue.

Jephthah's ſacrificing his Daughter, a great Crime.

The Law of *Cherem*, (as the *Hebrews* call it) which is a Law of a peculiar Nature, is deliver'd in theſe Words; *(n) No devoted Thing, which a Man ſhall devote to the Lord, of all that he hath, both of Man and Beaſt, and of the Field of his Poſſeſſion, ſhall be ſold, or redeemed; every devoted Thing is moſt holy to the Lord. None devoted, which ſhall be devoted by Men, ſhall be redeemed, but ſhall ſurely be put to Death.* Of this Sort a very learned *(o) Commentator* ſuppoſes this Vow of *Jephthah*'s to have been, and that therefore he could not *redeem* his Daughter, but was neceſſitated to put her to Death. It is to be obſerv'd however, that *(p) Cherem* (which is the Term

(m) Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. (n) Levit. xxvii. 28, 29. (o) Lud. Cappel. Diatr. de Voto Jephtæ.
(p) *Edwards*'s Enquiry into ſeveral Texts.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443. &c.

Term here made uſe of) ſignifies either Perſons devouted to Slaughter for their execrable Impieties, (as were the *Amalekites*, and other Nations, whom God commanded the *Iſraelites* to extirpate) or Things deſtin'd to Deſtruction (as were *Jericho* and *Ai*) for the Wickedneſs of thoſe to whom they appertain'd: So that the Law of *Cherem* related only to ſuch Perſons or Things, as, by an irrevocable Vow, were deſtin'd to utter Deſtruction for their horrid Crimes, and becauſe indeed there was particular Command from God, both for the making, or putting ſuch a Vow in Execution: But it can by no Means be pretended, either that *Jephthah*'s Daughter merited ſuch a Puniſhment, or that her Father had any Order or Commiſſion from God to inflict it. On the contrary, all human Sacrifices are expreſsly forbidden, as odious and deteſtable to God: *(q) Thou ſhalt not do ſo to the Lord thy God; thou ſhalt not burn thy Sons, and thy Daughters in the Fire*, as the Heathens us'd to do to their Gods; *for every Abomination to the Lord, which he hateth, have they done.*

THERE is one Law indeed, which ſeems to be of ſome Moment in the Caſe before us, and that is this: —— *(r) If a Man vow a Vow unto the Lord, or ſwear an Oath to bind his Soul with a Bond, he ſhall not break his Word, he ſhall do, according to all that proceedeth out of his Mouth.* But then all ſober *Caſuiſts* are agreed, that a Vow has only a *conſtructive*, not a *deſtructive* Force, *i. e.* that it can only lay a *new* Obligation, where there is none, or where there is one, *ſtrengthen* it; but that it cannot cancel a former Obligation, or ſuperinduce one, that is repugnant to it. Now all our Obligations to Obedience proceed from God. *(s)* He has an uncontroulable Right to give Laws to his Creatures: But if Men, by entering into Vows, could free themſelves from the Obligation of his Laws, they might then, whenever they pleas'd, by their own Act defeat his Authority. Whatever therefore is in itſelf forbidden by God, and for that Reaſon unlawful; whatever is againſt any Precept of *natural* or *reveal'd* Religion; whatever is inconſiſtent with thoſe *relative* Duties, which Men owe to one another; whatever, in ſhort, is, in any Reſpect, ſinful, cannot, by being made the Matter of a Vow, become juſtifiable. So that he, who hath vowed to do what cannot be done without Sin, is ſo far from being oblig'd to perform his Vow, that he is, notwithſtanding his Vow, oblig'd not to perform it; becauſe there is not only great Obliquity in making ſuch an unlawful Vow, but this Obliquity is ſo far from being leſſen'd, that it is aggravated by keeping it.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

(t) SINCE therefore the Thing vow'd by *Jephthah* ſeems to have been in itſelf unlawful; ſince his Daughter was innocent, and had done nothing to deſerve Death; ſince the running out to meet her Father, with Joy and Congratulation, was an Act of Piety, which ſeem'd to entitle her to his Love and Favour; ſince the natural Affection of a Father towards his Child muſt be ſtifled, before he could give Way to the Execution of the Sentence of Death upon her; ſince the ſacrificing of Children to their Gods was a Crime, for which the *heathen* Nations were juſtly deteſted, and puniſh'd by God; ſince *Jephthah*'s offering his Daughter as a Victim to the Lord, might reflect a Diſhonour upon the true God, as if he alſo delighted in ſuch Sacrifices; ſince theſe, I ſay, and ſeveral other Things, might be urg'd in Aggravation of this Action, we may ſafely and confidently aver, *(u)* with the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian, *that the Sacrifice, which* Jephthah *offered, was neither lawful, nor acceptable to God*, but, on the contrary, a very impious Act, and an abominable Crime, tho' it might poſſibly proceed from a miſtaken Principle of Religion.

THE religious Obſervation of Oaths and Vows has, at all Times, been eſteem'd a

But from what Motives he might think himſelf oblig'd to do it.

(q) Deut. xii. 31. *(r)* Numb. xxx. 2. *(s)* Biſhop *Smalridge*'s Sermons. *(t)* Ibid. *(u)* *Joſephus*'s Antiq. lib. v. c. 9.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

Duty incumbent on thoſe that made them; inſomuch that, even when they have been procur'd by *Guile*, they have not been thought deſtitute of their Obligation. The *Gibeonites* certainly impos'd upon the Children of *Iſrael*, when they obtain'd from them a League of Amity and Friendſhip; and yet we may obſerve what Notions the *Iſraelites* had of this Kind of Obligation, when, in their publick Conſultations, they ſay, *(x) We have ſworn unto them by the Lord God of* Iſrael; *now therefore we may not touch them.* This was a remarkable Inſtance before *Jephthah*'s Days, and 'tis not improbable that he might have it in his Remembrance, and imprudently make uſe of it, as a *Precedent* of the Irreverſibleneſs of Oaths, and of the inviolable Tye he was under by Reaſon of his Vow: But, in ſucceeding Times, there is a Paſſage in Scripture, which comes nearer to the Caſe now before us. *Saul*, in the Day of Battle, perceiving his Enemies to give Ground, out of the Abundance of his Zeal made a Vow to God, that whoever ſhould taſte any Food before the Purſuit was over, ſhould certainly die; and, upon this Occaſion, his own Son *Jonathan* had like to have been made a Sacrifice, merely becauſe the Father would have been thought religious and auſtere in the Obſervation of his Oath; notwithſtanding he was plainly excus'd from the Obligation of it as to his Son, who was both in another Place, and ignorant of his Father's Will, and under a Neceſſity of taking ſome ſmall Refreſhment, when he was ſo faint and hungry. What Wonder then if *Jephthah*, who, we have Reaſon to believe, was a Perſon much more religiouſly inclin'd than *Saul*, ſhould think himſelf under an Obligation to obſerve his Vow, even tho' it was to the Deſtruction of his own and only Daughter?

WHAT the Acceptableneſs of *Abraham*'s offering his Son *Iſaac* was, he had read in the Book of *Moſes*; and this might poſſibly leſſen the Horror of the Fact he was going to commit. For, tho' *Abraham* had the poſitive Command of God for what he did, which *Jephthah* could not pretend to, ſo that there was a great Diſparity between their two Caſes; yet it was plain, from the Acceptableneſs of *Abraham*'s Offering, and the great Reward beſtow'd on him for his intended Oblation, that the ſacrificing a beloved Child was not, in all Caſes, and under all Circumſtances, ſinful, but might be ſo *circumſtantiated*, as to be an Act of Piety, and approv'd in the Sight of God: And, when this Example prov'd ſuch an Action, (as to the Matter and Subſtance of it) not only lawful, but commendable, *Jephthah* might from hence be led into an Opinion, that the Difference between his Caſe, and that of *Abraham*, was not ſo great, as that what was laudable and almoſt *meritorious* in the one, ſhould be imputed as an unpardonable Crime to the other.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

HE had read likewiſe in the Law, that *(y) when thou ſhalt vow a Vow unto the Lord, thou ſhalt not be ſlack to pay it*; and was ſenſible, that a wilful Neglect of this was an heinous Crime, *(z)* a Mocking of God, a Diſſembling with Heaven, and an Act of Injuſtice and Unfaithfulneſs towards him, who is a ſevere *Exactor* of Vows, and is wont to avenge the Breach of them by the Infliction of the ſoreſt Puniſhments; and upon theſe *Premiſes* he might poſſibly argue with himſelf in this Manner. "Tho' I know that the Performance of "my Vow will be accompany'd with "Murther, yet I conſider likewiſe, that "my not performing it will be attended "with downright *Perjury*. Seeing then "there is a Neceſſity of ſinning one Way "or other, I am reſolv'd to chuſe the "former; for tho' that be an Injury to "my Daughter, yet the other is an Affront "to God. My Child is dear to me indeed, "but my God, my Father, is much "more ſo. 'Tis better therefore to be "cruel, than *impious*; to be guilty of "Bloodſhed, than to be perjur'd, and "falſe to the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

"*I have*

(x) Joſh. ix. 19. *(y)* Deut. xxiii. 21. *(z)* *Edwards*'s Enquiry into ſeveral Texts.

A. M. 2561, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1443, &c.

" *I have opened my Mouth unto the Lord,* " *and I cannot go back.* I muſt not re- " verſe, I dare not revoke the ſacred " Promiſe, which I have made to the " Almighty; but my firm and unſhaken " Purpoſe is to perform it." Thus the miſtaken Senſe of the indiſſoluble Obligation, which his Vow had laid upon him, blinded his Eyes, and ran him upon this fatal Rock.

HE could not but know, (had he conſider'd at all) that no Vow is *obligatory*, where the Matter of it is unlawful; or that, what is unlawful in itſelf, cannot poſſibly be made otherwiſe by the Interpoſition of a Vow. Nay, he could not but know, that to Act unlawfully, in Virtue of a Vow, was a *double Sin*, ſince not only the Vow itſelf was ſinful, but the Act, conſequent thereupon, was ſinful likewiſe; and yet ſo blind ſometimes is the Zeal of an *erroneous* Conſcience, that it will not ſuffer Men to perceive, at leaſt to be govern'd by the moſt rational and ſelf-evident Principles.

UPON the whole therefore we may conclude, that, how great ſoever this Sin of *Jephthah*'s was, yet (properly ſpeaking) it was the Sin of *Ignorance*, and the Effect of a miſguided Conſcience. By the bitter Complaint, which he utter'd upon the firſt Sight of his Daughter coming out to meet him, it is evident, that he was under great Trouble and Perplexity; and, as ſhe had done nothing to alienate his Affections from her, but, in this very Act of meeting him, had done ſomething to engage his Affections more ſtrongly towards her, the Bowels of a Father muſt neceſſarily yearn to ſave the Life of a loving and a beloved Child. The generous Offer, which ſhe made him, that he might do to her whatever he pleas'd, *according to his Vow*, tho' it made the doing of it leſs *unjuſt*, could not but add a freſh Sting to his Grief, and, if he had any Generoſity in his Breaſt, make him do it with more Reluctancy. No one, who is a Parent; no one, who has felt the Workings of Nature towards his own Iſſue; no one, who hath ſuffer'd, or who hath fear'd the Loſs of an only Child, but muſt be ſenſible, what Pangs of Sorrow, what Meltings of Compaſſion, what Agonies of Grief muſt pierce the Soul of *Jephthah*, when he imagin'd himſelf under the ſad Neceſſity of ſacrificing his own, his only, his Virgin-Daughter, whom he could not offer up for a Burnt-Offering, without ſacrificing at the ſame Time, all the Propenſions of Nature, all the Eaſe and Pleaſure of his Life, all the Proſpect of keeping up his Family. Nothing leſs than a miſtaken Opinion of the indiſpenſible Obligation of his Vow could prevail with him, thus to over-rule the ſtrong Motives of Intereſt and Inclination; and a Miſtake, which took its Riſe from ſo good a Principle, muſt, without Queſtion, at leaſt extenuate the Guilt, in the Judgment both of good-natur'd Men, and of an All-merciful God.

From Judges i. to the End of Ruth.

WE cannot however part with this remarkable Piece of Hiſtory, without making one Inference; *viz.* that we ſhould be ſtrictly careful how we engage ourſelves in any raſh and indeliberate Vows; becauſe, as a Vow is confeſſedly an Act of Religion, when once *we have opened our Mouths unto the Lord*, we cannot, without manifeſt Prevarication and Contempt of God's Authority, *go back*. And therefore, (to conclude in the Words of a great *(a)* Divine already quoted upon this Subject) " as in *civil* Life, Men of the beſt " Character for Integrity, and ſuch as are " moſt punctual in keeping their Words, " are obſerv'd to be very ſparing in making " Promiſes; ſo in Religion, the beſt Way " we can take to obſerve the Precept " given us by *Solomon*, *(b) that when we* " *vow a Vow unto God, we ſhould not* " *defer to pay it*, will be in the firſt Place " to obſerve another Precept, which he " lays down before this, *viz.* that *(c)* " *we ſhould not be raſh with our Mouths,* " *nor let our Hearts be haſty to utter any* " *Thing before God.*"

CHAP

(a) Smalridge's Sermons. *(b)* Eccleſ. v. 4. *(c)* Ibid. ver. 2.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

CHAP. III.

From the Birth of Samuel, *to the Death of* Saul.

The History.

Samuel's *Birth and Parentage.*

DURING the Time of *Samſon*'s great Exploits, both the *Civil* and *Eccleſiaſtical* Adminiſtration ſeems to have been in the Hands of *Eli* the High-Prieſt, in the Beginning of whoſe Government *Samuel* was born. He was the Son of *Elkanah*, a *Levite* who dwelt in *Ramah* †, a City belonging to the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and (as the Cuſtom of thoſe Times was) had two Wives, whoſe Names were *Hannah*, and *Peninnah*. * Thrice every Year he us'd to go to *Shiloh*, there to offer up his uſual Sacrifice, and, as he was a pious and religious Man, he generally took his two Wives with him, that they in like Manner might make their Oblations. Now *Hannah*, tho' ſhe had no Children, was his favourite Wife, and therefore, at † every Feaſt upon the *Peace-Offering*, he uſually ſent her a ſeparate Meſs, and of the choiceſt of the Meat; which the other perceiving, was wont to † upbraid her with her *Sterility*, or Want of Children. *Hannah* took this ſo ſore to Heart, that all the kind Things, which her Huſband ſaid to her, could not aſſuage or comfort her; but, as ſoon as ſhe roſe from Table, away ſhe haſtens to the Tabernacle, and there *pours out her Soul before God*, deſiring of him to bleſs her with a Son, which Favour

† *Ramah* ſignifies an *Eminence*, or high Situation, and is therefore an Appellation given to ſeveral Places, that are built in this Manner. This is ſaid to have ſtood upon Mount *Ephraim*, thereby to diſtinguiſh it from other Towns, in different Tribes, of the ſame Denomination; and the Reaſon why it is here called *Ramathaim*, in the *Dual* Number, is, (as ſome imagine) becauſe it was built upon two Hills, which made it appear as a double City, and, becauſe it was ſituated on high, and had a Watch-Tower built in it, it therefore had the Title of *Zophim* added to it. It ſtood upon the Road, that led from *Samaria* to *Jeruſalem*; and, for this Reaſon, as well as its advantageous Situation, *Baaſha*, King of *Iſrael*, caus'd it to be fortify'd, that there might be no Paſſage out of the Land of *Judah*, into that of *Iſrael*, (1 Kings xv. 17. and 2 Chron. xvi. 1.) but in St *Jerom*'s Days, it was no more than a ſmall Village. Here it was that *Samuel* paſs'd a great Part of his Time; for his Mother's Dedication of him to the Service of God did not confine him to *Shiloh*, after that God had called him out to a publick Employ, and appointed him his Reſidence in a Place, more convenient for the Execution of it. The Truth is, after the Captivity of the Ark, and the Death of *Eli*, all religious Ceremonies ſeem to have ceas'd at *Shiloh*; for which Reaſon it is ſaid, that *Samuel* built an Altar at *Ramah*, the Place of his Reſidence, to the Intent that the People might reſort to him, either to receive Judgment, or to offer Sacrifices, which, tho' it was contrary to the Law of *Moſes*, ſeem'd to be a *Caſe of Neceſſity*; becauſe the *Ark* being at one Place, and the *Tabernacle* at another, neither of them could properly be reſorted to, either for ſacrificing, or any other Part of publick Worſhip. *Patrick*'s, *Le Clerc*'s, and *Calmet*'s Commentaries, and Univerſal Hiſtory.

* The Precept is exactly thus, —— *Three Times in the Year all thy Males ſhall appear before the Lord thy God*, (Exod. xxiii. 17.) which were at the Feaſt of the Paſſover, the Pentecoſt, and that of the Tabernacles; but Women were exempted from this Attendance, and therefore it was an extraordinary Act of Piety for *Elkanah* to take his two Wives with him.

† The Blood of this Peace-Offering was ſhed at the Foot of the Altar, the Fat was burnt, the Breaſt and right Shoulder was the Prieſt's *Perquiſite*, and all the reſt belong'd to the Perſon, who brought the Victim. With this he made a *Feaſt of Charity*, to which he called his Friends and Relations, and, in ſeveral Places of Scripture, God reminds him to invite the *Levite*, the Poor, the Fatherleſs, and the Widow. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† Sterility was look'd upon among the *Jews* as one of the greateſt Misfortunes, that could befal any Woman; inſomuch that to have a Child, tho' the Mother immediately died thereupon, was accounted a leſs Affliction, than to have none at all. And to this Purpoſe we may obſerve, that the Midwife comforts *Rachel* in her Labour, even tho' ſhe knew her to lie at the Point of Death, in theſe Terms, *Fear not, for thou ſhalt have this Son alſo*, Gen. xxxv. 17. *Saurin*, in Vol. IV. Diſſert. 17.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

Favour if he would grant her, ſhe promis'd to make him a *Nazarite*, and, all the Days of his Life, devote him to his Service.

HER Prayers were heard, and, in a proper Time ſhe conceiv'd, and brought forth a Son, whom ſhe call'd *Samuel*, even becauſe ſhe had *aſked him of the Lord*, (for ſo his Name imports) and, after he was grown to a competent Age, ſhe brought him to *Shiloh*, and, in a very joyful and thankful Manner, preſented him to *Eli*, who gladly receiv'd him, and immediately cloath'd him with a proper Habit, even with a Linnen * *Ephod*, that he might attend on the Service of the *Tabernacle*.

Eli's remiſs Government. The Death of his two Sons, Himſelf, and Daughter-in-Law.

ELI himſelf was a very good Man, but by much too indulgent to his Children. He had two Sons *Hophni* and *Phineas*, who were mere *Libertines*. They domineer'd over the Men, and debauch'd the Women at their Devotions; and ſo far were they from being content with the Portion, which God had allotted them as Prieſts, that they forc'd from the People (even before they had made their *Oblations*) what Part of the Sacrifice they pleas'd; which gave ſo general a Diſguſt, that Religion grew into Contempt, and the Worſhip of God came to be diſus'd.

ELI was not unacquainted with his Sons ill Conduct; but, inſtead of chaſtizing them as his Authority requir'd, he contented himſelf with reproving them now and then, but that, in ſuch gentle and mild Terms, as rather encourag'd than deterr'd them from proceeding in their wicked Practices; till at length, God, being provok'd with this his *Remiſſneſs*, † ſent a Prophet to threaten him, and his Family with utter Deſtruction; to upbraid him with his Ingratitude, in ſlighting the *ſacerdotal* Honour, which he had conferr'd on him; to foretel the Death of his two Sons both in one Day, † the Removal of his Prieſthood into another and better Family, and the extreme Poverty, which his Poſterity would fall into, upon their Ejection from the *ſacerdotal* Office: Nor was it long before God diſcover'd the ſame heavy Judgments to *Samuel*, which was the firſt Revelation he made to this young Prophet, and which *Eli* (when he was told it) receiv'd with a Mind fully reſign'd to the divine Pleaſure; *(a) It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good.*

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

IN theſe Days † there were but few *Prophets*, and *Revelations* were very ſcarce; and therefore, when the *Iſraelites* perceiv'd by the Truth of his Predictions, that God had appointed *Samuel* to the *prophetick* Office, they were not a little rejoic'd: And it was from the great Expectations, they

* The Ephod which the High Prieſt wore (as we have deſcrib'd it elſewhere, page 474.) was a very rich Habit indeed, Exod. xxviii. 6. but there were other Kinds of Ephods, which not only Prieſts and *Levites*, but even Laymen, upon ſome Occaſions, wore, as we find in the Inſtance of *David*, 2 Sam. vi. 14. which was not a *ſacred*, but an *honorary* Garment, (as we may call it) and ſuch as the High-Prieſt might order *Samuel* to wear, to diſtinguiſh him from ſome other inferior Officers belonging to the Tabernacle. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Who this Prophet was, Commentators are at a Loſs to know. Some imagine, that it was *Phineas*, the Son of *Eleazar*; but *Phineas* very probably was dead long before this Time. Others therefore will needs have it to have been *Elkanah*, *Samuel*'s Father; and ſome *Samuel* himſelf: But we no where read, that the Father was endu'd with the Spirit of Prophecy, and the Son was certainly then too young, and unacquainted with the Voice of God. The ſafeſt Way therefore is, to own our Ignorance of what the ſacred Hiſtorian hath not thought proper to diſcover to us. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† The High Prieſthood was originally ſettled upon *Eleazar*, the Son of *Aaron*, by a Divine Decree; but that Decree being conditional only, 'tis reaſonable to preſume, that there was ſome great Offence or other in *Eleazar*'s Family, (tho' not recorded in Scripture) which provok'd God to remove it into the Family of *Ithamar*, who was *Aaron*'s youngeſt Son, and from whom *Eli* deſcended; and here, for the abominable Practices of his Sons, which he was too negligent to reſtrain, God threatens to tranſlate the Prieſthood back again, from the Family of *Ithamar*, to that of *Eleazar*, which accordingly happen'd in the Reign of King *Solomon*, who depos'd *Abiathar*, the laſt of *Eli*'s Line from the *Pontificate*, and ſet up *Zadock* in his Stead. *Pool*'s Annotations.

(a) 1 Sam. iii. 18.

† Whatever Revelations God might impart to ſome pious Perſons privately, there was at this Time none publickly acknowledg'd for a Prophet, unto whom the People might reſort to know the Mind of God; nay, ſo little acquainted were theſe Ages with the prophetick Spirit, that we read of no more than two Prophets, *Judg.* iv. 4. and vi. 8. in all the Days of the Judges. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

they had of God's Favour in renewing this Order of Men among them, that they took up Arms, in order to reſcue themſelves from the *Philiſtines* Yoke. The Army of the *Iſraelites* encamp'd at a Place, which was afterwards called * *Eben-ezer*, and that of the *Philiſtines* at *Aphek*, a City of *Judah*; but when they came to join Battle, the *Iſraelites* were defeated with the Loſs of four Thouſand Men.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

The Reaſon of this Defeat was imputed by ſome to their Want of the Ark in the Army, which, as the *Symbol* of God's Preſence, would be a ſure Means of Succeſs; and therefore they ſent to *Hophni* and *Phineas* to bring it with them, and, when it arriv'd in the Camp, receiv'd it with many a joyful Acclamation. The *Philiſtines*, at firſt, were diſpirited at the News, as much as their Enemies were animated: But, at length taking Heart, and exhorting one another to act courageouſly, they repuls'd the *Iſraelites*, when they came to attack them; and, having ſlain thirty Thouſand of their Foot, (among whom were *Hophni* and *Phineas*) they routed the reſt, and put them all to Flight, ſo that the *Ark of the Lord* fell into their Hands.

The Captivity of the Ark, *and the Wonders it did until it was ſent home.*

This ill News a Soldier of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, eſcaping from the Field of Battle, brought to *Shiloh* that very Day, with the uſual Emblems of extreme Sorrow, * his Clothes rent, and Earth upon his Head; and then there was no ſmall Outcry and Lamentation in the City. *Eli*, enquiring the Cauſe of it, had the Soldier brought before him, who gave him an Account, * that the *Iſraelites* were routed, his two Sons ſlain, and the Ark taken. *Eli* heard the Defeat of the Army, and the Death of his Sons with Courage and Unconcern enough; but, when he came to underſtand, that the Ark of the Lord was fallen into the Enemy's Hand, his Spirits forſook him, and, being both heavy and aged he fell from his Seat, and broke his Neck and died, after he had been the ſupreme

● This Place is here mention'd *prophetically*; for it had not this Name till about twenty Years after, 1 Sam. iv. 1. when *Samuel* fought with the *Philiſtines*, and gave them a total Overthrow, and ſet up a Monument of his Victory (for the proper Name ſignifies *the Stone of Help*) in the Field of Battle, which lay on the North Border of *Judah*, not far from *Mizpeh*; and *Aphek*, where the *Philiſtines* encamp'd, muſt not be far diſtant from it. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

* If we conſult Joſh. vii. 6. Job ii. 12. and Ezek. xxvii. 30. we ſhall find, that this was the Manner of Mens expreſſing their deep Sorrow for any great Calamity that had befallen them. And, accordingly, we find *Virgil* repreſenting *Latinus* rending his Clothes, and throwing Duſt upon his grey Hairs, when he laments his private and publick Calamities:

——————It ſciſsâ veſte Latinus
Canitiem immundo infuſam pulvere turpans. Æneid 12.

* Who this *Benjamite* was, that brought the ill News to *Shiloh* of the Loſs of the Battle, the Hiſtory is ſilent, and the Conjecture of ſome *Jews*, that it probably was *Saul*, is very uncertain and precarious: But there is ſomething very remarkable in the Account which he gives of the Action. The Words are theſe: —— *And* Eli *ſaid to the* Benjamite, *What is there done in the Battle, my Son? And the Meſſenger anſwer'd and ſaid,* Iſrael *is fled before the* Philiſtines, *and there hath been alſo a great Slaughter among the People, and thy two Sons,* Hophni *and* Phineas, *are dead, and the Ark of God is taken,* 1 Sam. iv. 16, 17. Madam *Dacier* highly commends the Manner, wherein the ſacred Hiſtorian makes this Meſſenger ſpeak, and compares theſe Words, Hophni *and* Phineas *are dead, and the Ark of the Lord is taken,* with thoſe of *Antilocus* to *Achilles*, when he tells him the ſad News, ——

Κεῖται Πάτροκλος· νέκυος δὶ ἀμφιμάχονται
Γυμνὸν· ἀπὰς τὰ γε τεύχε' ἔχει κορυθαίολος Ἕκτωρ. Iliad. 18.

Whereupon ſhe quotes the Gloſſary, which *Euſtathius* has upon this Paſſage in *Homer*. *This Speech of* Antilocus (ſays that excellent Critick) *affords us a Pattern, with what Brevity ſuch melancholy News ſhould be related: For, in two Verſes, it compriſes every Thing that happen'd, the Death of* Patroclus, *the Perſon who ſlew him, the Encounter about his Body, and his Arms in the Poſſeſſion of his Enemy. The* Greek *Tragick Poets have not been ſo wiſe as to imitate this; and, of all others,* Euripides, *who, upon the moſt doleful Occaſion, is ſo apt to make long Recitals, is moſt egregiouſly defective herein.* Homer *is the only Author, that deſerves to be follow'd. Nothing is more ridiculous, than to hear a Meſſenger, when he is to report ſome very bad News, running into tedious Circumſtances, and pathetick Expreſſions. All he talks is not minded: For he, to whom he addreſſes himſelf, cannot attend to what he ſays; the firſt Word that acquaints him with the Misfortune, makes him deaf to every Thing elſe. Saurin,* Vol. IV. Diſſert. 23.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

ſupreme Magiſtrate in *Iſrael* * for the Space of forty Years: And (what was a farther Family-Misfortune) his Son *Phineas* had a Wife, then big with Child and near her Time, who, hearing of her Father's and Huſband's Death, and (what was the worſt of all) of the Captivity of the Ark, fell in Labour at the News, and being deliver'd of a Son, had juſt Strength to name him *Johabod*, (i. e. no Glory) before ſhe died; becauſe *the Ark*, which was the *Glory of* Iſrael, (as ſhe aſſigns the Reaſon) *was departed from them.*

THE *Philiſtines*, having thus got Poſſeſſion of the Ark, * carry'd it in Triumph to one of their *principal* Cities, nam'd *Aſhdod*, and there plac'd it in the Temple of their God *Dagon* hard by his Image. The next Morning the People of * *Aſhdod*, going into the Temple, found *Dagon* fallen down upon his Face before the Ark; but, ſuppoſing this to be an Accident, they ſet him up again, and again, next Morning, found him not only fallen down, but his Head and the Palms of his Hands broken off, and lying upon the Threſhold; whence there aroſe a ſuperſtitious Uſe among the *Philiſtines*, that neither Prieſt nor People would ever † tread upon a Threſhold.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

BY

* The *Septuagint*, and ſome antient Manuſcripts, make the Term of *Eli*'s Magiſtracy to be no more than twenty Years; and, to reconcile this with the *Hebrew* Text, ſome ſuppoſe, either that he had *Samſon* join'd in the Government with him for the firſt twenty Years of his Adminiſtration, or his Sons, for the laſt; but there is no Reaſon for the Solution of a Difficulty, which ariſes from nothing elſe, but a Fault in the Text of the *Septuagint*. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* It was a Cuſtom among the *Heathens*, to carry in Triumph the Images of the Gods of ſuch Nations, as they had vanquiſh'd. *Iſaiah* propheſies of *Cyrus*, that in this Manner he would treat the Gods of *Babylon:* —— Bel *boweth down*, Nebo *ſtoopeth; their Idols were upon the Beaſts, and upon the Cattel*, —— *and themſelves are gone into Captivity*, Iſaiah xlvi. 1, 2. *Daniel* foretels of *Ptolomy Euergetes*, that he would *carry captive into* Egypt *the Gods of the* Syrians, *with their Princes*, Dan xi. 8. And the like Predictions are to be met with in *Jeremiah*, xlviii. 7. and in *Amos* i. 15. We need leſs wonder therefore, that we find *Plutarch*, in the Life of *Marcellus*, telling us, that he took away, out of the Temples of *Syracuſe*, the moſt beautiful Pictures and Statues of their Gods; and, that, afterwards, it became a Reproach to *Marcellus*, and rais'd the Indignation of other Nations againſt *Rome*, "That he carry'd along "with him, not *Men* only, but the very *Gods* captive, and in Triumph." *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 24.

* The *Philiſtines* were Deſcendants from *Mizraim*, the Father of the *Egyptians*, and ſo, in all Probability, having their firſt Settlement in *Egypt*, or the Parts adjoining, lay to the South-Weſt of the Land of *Canaan*. In Proceſs of Time however, they made Inroads upon *Canaan*, and, in *Abraham*'s Days, had got Poſſeſſion of a good Part of the Territories, which lay along the *weſtern Coaſts* of the *Mediterranean Sea*. This Tract of Ground was divided into five Principalities, or little Kingdoms, *viz. Gaza*, *Aſkelon*, *Aſhdod*, *Gath*, and *Akron*; which, for the better underſtanding of ſome Particulars related of the Ark, during its Stay in this Country, it will not be improper to deſcribe all together. The City of *Gaza* (from which the Territory took its Name) ſtood, as it were, on the very *South-Weſt* Angle, or Corner of the Land of *Canaan*; but of this Place we have ſpoken before. To the *North* of *Gaza* lay next the City of *Aſkelon*, called by the *Greeks*, *Aſcalon*, and of great Note among the *Gentiles* for a Temple dedicated to *Dirceto*, the Mother of *Semiramis*, who was here worſhipp'd in the Form of a *Mermaid*. To the *North* of *Aſcalon* lay *Aſhdod*, called by the *Greeks*, *Azotus*, and famous for the Temple of the God *Dagon*, whereof we have taken Notice before. Still more to the *North* lay *Gath*, memorable for being the Birth-Place of the Giant *Goliah*, whom *David* ſlew, and of ſeveral others of the ſame gigantick Race. It was diſmantled by *Ozias*, King of *Judah*, and finally laid waſte by *Hazael*, King of *Syria:* However it recover'd itſelf, and retain'd its old Name, in the Days of *Euſebius*, and St *Jerom*, who place it about four Miles from *Eleutheropolis*, in the Way to *Lidda*. The moſt *Northern* of theſe Cities, ſtill upon the Coaſt of the *Mediterranean Sea*, was *Ekron*, called by the *Greeks*, *Accaron*, a Place of great Wealth and Power, and famous for the idolatrous Worſhip of *Beelzebub*, who had here a celebrated Temple and Oracle. But of this Idol we ſhall have occaſion to ſay more, when we come to the Reign of *Ahaziah*, King of *Judah*, who ſent in his Illneſs to conſult him. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

† It is ſomewhat ſtrange, that when the *Philiſtines* ſaw their *Dagon* caſt down before the Ark of God, with his Head and Hands broken off, they ſhould not thence infer, that he was no more than a vain Idol: But inſtead of that, we find them honouring the very Threſhold, whereby he receiv'd theſe *Maims*, as if they had been conſecrated, or ſome Divinity infus'd into them, from the mere Touch of this Idol. This is a ſore Inſtance of Blindneſs and Infatuation; but it is no more, than what other Heathen Nations fell into. For, whether the Cuſtom took its firſt Riſe from this Practice of the *Philiſtines*, or no, 'tis certain, that among the *Romans* the Threſhold was conſecrated to the Goddeſs *Veſta*, and thoſe, which belong'd to Temples, were always held in the higheſt Veneration, as appears from *Juvenal*. ——

——————Tarpeïum Limen adora. Sat. 6.

and that other Paſſage in *Tibullus*, ——

Non ego, ſi merui, dubitem procumbere Templis,
Et dare Sacratis Oſcula Liminibus. Lib. i. Eleg. 5.

Nay,

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

BY this Means the People of *Aſhdod* could not but perceive, that their *Dagon* was far inferior to the God of *Iſrael*, who, to make them ſtill more ſenſible of this, ſmote them, and the Inhabitants of the Places adjacent, with *Emerods*, and deſtroy'd the Fruits of their Grounds with Swarms of *Mice*; ſo that (to redreſs their Complaints) the Princes of the *Philiſtines* order'd the Ark to be remov'd to *Gath*, where the ſame Judgments befel the People of that Place; and, when from thence it was carry'd to *Ekron*, not only the † Plague of the *Emerods*, but a waſting Peſtilence likewiſe, went along with it; ſo that the People were reſolv'd to ſend it away, and to that Purpoſe, call'd their Prieſts together to adviſe with them in what Manner they might beſt do it.

THE Prieſts advis'd them to provide a new Cart, and to yoke to it two milch Kine, that had never drawn before, but to keep up their Calves confin'd. In this Cart they order'd them to place the *Ark*, and (becauſe it was proper to make ſome *Treſpaſs-Offering* to the God of *Iſrael*) to have five * golden *Emerods*, and as many golden *Mice* (according to the Number of the principal Cities of the *Philiſtines*) made, and put in a Coffer by the Side of the Ark. But, above all, they caution'd them to take Notice, which Way the * Kine went; for, if they took towards *Judea*, they might conclude that theſe Judgments were of the God of *Iſrael*'s Infliction, if any other Way, they might look upon them only as common *Accidents*. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

WHEN all Things were thus got ready, the Kine were let go; and, taking the Road which led to *Bethſhemeth*, in the Way to *Judea*, they went lowing along until

Nay, at this very Day, there are ſome *Moſques* in *Perſia*, whoſe Threſholds are cover'd over with Plates of Silver, and which the People are not allow'd to tread on; for that is a Crime, which cannot be expiated without undergoing very ſevere Pains and Penalties. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† The Word *Apholim*, which only occurs here, and in the xxviiith Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, is, by different Interpreters, ſuppos'd to ſignify different Things. Some take it for a *Dyſentery*, others for what they call *Procidentia Ani*; ſome for a *Cancer*, and others for ſomething *Venereal* in that Part. The Scripture tells us expreſsly, that *God ſmote his Enemies in the hinder Parts*, Pſal. lxxviii. 66. And therefore our Tranſlation is not amiſs, which ſuppoſes their Malady to have been ſuch painful Tumours in the Fundament, as very frequently turn into *Ulcers*. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

* It was a prevailing Opinion among the *Heathens*, that the only Way to appeaſe their Gods, when offended at them, was to offer them Preſents; ——

Munera, crede mihi, capiunt homineſque Deoſque,
Placatur Donis *Jupiter* ipſe datis. OVID, de Arte, Lib. iii.

and therefore no Wonder that the *Philiſtines* Prieſts hit upon this Thought: And why they ſent, along with the Ark, the Images of the Parts, which were afflicted with this ſore Diſeaſe, might proceed from a common Cuſtom likewiſe among the *Heathens*, of conſecrating to their Gods ſuch Monuments of their Deliverance, as repreſented the Evils from whence they had eſcaped, or the Members, which had been diſorder'd. Thus the People of *Athens*, having been afflicted with a ſhameful Diſeaſe for not receiving the Myſteries of *Bacchus* with a proper Reverence, and conſulting the Oracle what they were to do, in order to have it remov'd, were directed to make Figures of the Part affected, and preſent them to the God, which gave them this Counſel: And accordingly the *Philiſtines*, hoping ſhortly to be deliver'd from the *Emerods* and *Mice*, wherewith they were ſorely infeſted, took the ſame Method to get quit of them. Nor is the Practice ceas'd among the *Indians* (as *Tavernier* relates in his Travels, Page 92.) when any Pilgrim goes to a Pagod for the Cure of any Diſeaſe, for him to bring the Figure of the Member afflicted, either in Gold, Silver, or Copper, according to his Quality, and to offer it to the Idol in a moſt ſubmiſſive Manner. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

* It was no bad Policy in the *Philiſtines* to take milch Kine, that had never been yok'd before, to draw the Cart, in order to know, whether there was the Hand of God in what had befallen them. As theſe Creatures were unacquainted with the Yoke, it would be a Wonder if they ſhould go jointly together, and not thwart, or draw counter to each other; it would be a Wonder if their natural Affection would not incline them to return to their Calves, which were left behind; and it would be ſtill a greater Wonder, if, when there were ſo many different Ways to take, they ſhould go directly forward to *Judea*, without any Manner of Deviation. It was therefore a Matter of no ſmall Sagacity, for them to make this Experiment: To ſay nothing, that it was a receiv'd Opinion among the Heathens, that, in the Motions of an Heifer, or Cow that was never yok'd, there was ſomething *ominous*, and declarative of the Divine Will.

Bos tibi, Phœbus ait, ſolis occurret in Arvis,
Nullum paſſa jugum, curvique immunis Aratri;
Hac Duce carpe vias. OVID. Metam. lib. iii.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

until they came to the Field of one *Joſhua*, and there ſtood ſtill by a great Stone. *Bethſhemeth* was one of the Cities belonging to the *Levites*, and therefore, when Word was brought them of the Arrival of the Ark, they went and took it down, and the Coffer with it; and, cleaving the Wood of the Cart for a Fire, ſacrific'd the two Kine for a *Burnt-Offering* to the Lord. But, whether out of Joy or Curioſity, ſo it was, that ſome of the *Bethſhemites* adventuring to look into the Ark (which was expreſsly againſt the divine Command) were immediately ſlain to the Number of *ſeventy*, which ſo terrify'd the reſt, that they ſent to the People of *Kirjath-jearim*, acquainting them that the *Philiſtines* had brought back the Ark, and deſiring them to come and fetch it, which accordingly they did, and plac'd it in the Houſe of one *Abinadab*, (whoſe Son was conſecrated to keep it) and there it continu'd for the Space of twenty Years.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Samuel's *Government, and his Sons Maladminiſtration.*

UPON the Death of *Eli*, *Samuel* ſucceeded to the Government; and having called the People together, very probably upon the occaſion of removing the Ark from *Bethſhemeth* to *Kirjath-jearim*, * he exhorted them very earneſtly to renounce their *idolatrous* Practices, and to devote themſelves entirely to the Worſhip of God, and then they need not doubt but that he would deliver them from all their Enemies. This the People promis'd him faithfully to do; ſo that *Samuel* diſmiſs'd them for the preſent, but order'd them to meet him again, within a certain Time, at † *Mizpeh*.

HERE they held a ſolemn Faſt and Humiliation to the Lord. They wept, and pray'd, confeſs'd their Sins, offer'd Sacrifices, and ‡ made Libations; and *Samuel*

* The Speech, which, according to *Joſephus*, *Samuel* makes to the People, upon this Occaſion, is to this Effect: ——"Ye Men of *Iſrael*, ſince ye find by Experience, that the Malice of your Enemies is implacable, and that "your earneſt Supplications to God for Relief are graciouſly receiv'd; you ſhould do well to conſider, that your "Wiſhing for the Freedom you want will never do the Buſineſs, without exerting your Power to the uttermoſt, upon "the proper Means of procuring it: For to do otherwiſe, is but praying one Way and acting another. Wherefore, "in the firſt Place, be careful not to bring Scandal upon your Profeſſion by ill Manners, but turn yourſelves to the "Love and Practice of Juſtice, without Partiality, or Corruption. Purge your Minds of all groſs Affections. Turn "to God, call upon him, adore him, and honour him in your Lives and Converſations, as well as with your Lips. "Do good Things, and Good will come on it, *i. e.* Liberty and Victory; for theſe are Bleſſings not to be obtain'd "by Force of Men, Strength of Body, or Bands of Soldiers, but God, who is Truth itſelf, has promis'd them, as "the Rewards of Probity and Righteouſneſs, and you may depend upon it, he will never diſappoint you." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. c. 2.

† The *Mizpeh* here mention'd (as appears from the Circumſtances of the Story) muſt be different from that which is remark'd in the Hiſtory of *Jephthah*. There is indeed another *Mizpeh* mention'd among the Cities of *Judah* (Joſh. xv. 38.) and a third, among thoſe of *Benjamin* (Joſh. xviii. 26.) Some are of Opinion, that theſe two Cities are one and the ſame, and are only ſuppos'd to be two, becauſe they lie in the Confines of each *Tribe*; but, if they are not the ſame, it ſeems moſt probable, that the *Mizpeh* in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, was the City, which is here ſpoken of. And we may obſerve farther, that, as *Mizpeh* is ſaid to be ſituated not far from *Eben-ezer*, and probably on the *Eaſt*, or *North* Side; ſo *Shen* (if it be the Name of a Place, and not rather of ſome *ſharp Rock* thereabouts) was ſituated not far from it, on the oppoſite, *i. e.* on the *Weſt*, or *South-weſt* Side, to which *Bethcar* muſt needs be contiguous. *Wells's* Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III. c. 1.

‡ The Words in our Tranſlation run thus:——*And they gathered to* Mizpeh, *and drew Water, and poured it out before the Lord*, 1 Sam. vii. 6; But what we are to underſtand by this Water, the Conjectures of Commentators have been very various. Some take theſe Words in a *metaphorical* Senſe, to denote thoſe *Tears of Contrition*, which were drawn, as it were, from the Bottom of their Hearts, and fell from their Eyes *before the Lord*. Others think, that with this Water they waſh'd their Bodies, (as they are ſuppos'd to have done upon another Occaſion, *Exod.* xix. 10.) to ſignify the Purification of their Souls from the Pollution of Sin. Others, that they made uſe of it to cleanſe the Ground where *Samuel* was to erect an Altar, that it might not ſtand upon an impure Place. Some ſuppoſe that it was employ'd as an Emblem of Humiliation, of Prayer, of Expiation, of Execration, and I know not what beſides. But the moſt probable Opinion is, that this Water was, upon this Occaſion, *poured out*, by Way of *Libation*, *before God:* And, for the Support of this, it is commonly alledg'd, that Libations of this Kind were very cuſtomary in antient Times; that *Theophraſtus*, as he is cited by *Porphyry*, (de Abſtin. lib. ii.) tells us, that the earlieſt Libations were of Water, though afterwards Honey and Wine came into Requeſt; that *Virgil* (Æneid iv.) mentions the Practice of ſprinkling the Water of the Lake *Avernus*; and that *Homer* (Odyſſ. 12.) remarks, that, for Want of Wine, the Companions of *Ulyſſes* pour'd out Water in a Sacrifice, which they offer'd to the Gods. 'Tis certain, that *David poured out unto the Lord* the Water, which the three gallant Men in his Army brought him *from the Well of* Bethlehem,

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

Samuel took this Opportunity to adminiſter Juſtice among them. The *Philiſtines* hearing of this their Aſſembly, took the Alarm, and, coming upon them unawares, put them into no ſmall Conſternation. Upon *Samuel*'s Sacrifice and Interceſſion however, God declar'd himſelf manifeſtly in Favour of the *Iſraelites:* For, as ſoon as the Fight began, there was heard * ſuch a dreadful Peal of Thunder, as ſtruck Terror and Amazement into the Enemy, ſo that they betook themſelves inſtantly to Flight, and were purſu'd by the *Iſraelites* as far as *Bethcar*. The Truth is, this was ſo ſignal a Victory, that, for a long Time the *Philiſtines* durſt not appear upon the Frontiers of *Iſrael*, but were forc'd to reſtore the Cities, which they had taken from them; ſo that *Samuel* had good Reaſon to ſet up a Monument (which he did between *Mizpeh* and *Shen*, calling it *Ebenezer*, i. e. *the Stone of Help)* in Memory of ſo great a Deliverance.

After this Action, the moſt Part of *Samuel*'s Government was employ'd in a peaceable Adminiſtration of Juſtice. For which Purpoſe he took a Circuit every Year round a great Tract of the Country: But, as he grew in Years, he appointed his two Sons, *Joel* and *Abiah* to the Execution of that Office, who, degenerating * from their Father's Example, became ſuch mercenary and corrupt *Judges*, that the Elders of *Iſrael* came in a Body to *Samuel*, complain'd of the Grievances they lay under, by Reaſon of his Infirmity, and his Sons Male-Adminiſtration, and thereupon demanded to have the Form of their Government chang'd, and a King inſtituted among them, as there was in other Nations. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

This Demand was far from being agreeable to *Samuel*; however he conſulted God upon it, who gave him Anſwer, that he ſhould comply with the People in what they deſir'd, notwithſtanding the Affront did terminate not ſo much upon *Samuel*, as himſelf: But, before they proceeded to the Choice of a King, he order'd him to acquaint them with what his Prerogatives were, and what Rights they might expect that he would demand from them; and withal, to inform them, † that Slavery to them and their Children, Subjection to the meaneſt Offices, Loſs of Liberty, heavy Taxes, conſtant War, and many other Inconveniencies, would be the Conſequence of a kingly Power. But † all

hem, at the Hazard of their Lives, 2 Sam. xxiii. 16. and therefore, though the Law does not enjoin any ſuch Libations of Water; yet, ſince there is no poſitive Prohibition of them, why may we not ſuppoſe, that, upon this extraordinary Occaſion, ſomething ſingular and extraordinary might have been done? *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

* *Joſephus* gives us this Account of the whole Tranſaction:——"In ſome Places God ſhook the Foundations "of the Earth under the Feet of the *Philiſtines*, ſo that they could not ſtand without ſtaggering: In others, it open'd, "and ſwallow'd them up alive, before they knew where they were; while the Claps of Thunder, and Flaſhes of "Fire were ſo violent, that their very Eyes and Limbs were ſcorch'd to ſuch a Degree, that they could neither "ſee their Way before them, nor handle their Arms." Jewiſh Antiq. lib. vi. c. 2.

* It may poſſibly be made a Queſtion, why God did not puniſh *Samuel*, as he did *Eli*, for the Wickedneſs of his Sons? But to this it may be anſwer'd, That *Samuel*'s Sons were not ſo bad as thoſe of *Eli*; ſince taking Bribes privately was not like openly profaning the *Tabernacle*, and making the Worſhip of God contemptible. And, beſides this, it is poſſible, that *Samuel* might be ignorant of the Corruption of his Sons; ſince he liv'd at *Ramah*, and they at *Beerſheba*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The Rules of Conduct, which God preſcribes to the Perſon, that ſhould at any Time be conſtituted King over *Iſrael*, are of a quite different Sort to theſe Practices. *He ſhall not multiply Horſes to himſelf, neither ſhall he multiply Wives to himſelf, neither ſhall he greatly multiply to himſelf Silver or Gold.* He ſhall *write him a Copy of the Law in a Book, and he ſhall read therein all the Days of his Life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, and to keep all the Words of this Law, and theſe Statutes, to do them, that his Heart be not lifted up above his Brethren, and that he turn not aſide from the Commandments, to the Right-Hand, or to the Left*, Deut. xvii. 16, &c. So that *Samuel* does not, in the Words before us, define what are the juſt Rights of Kings, but deſcribes only ſuch Practices, as the Kings of the *Eaſt*, who were *deſpotick* Princes, and look'd upon their Subjects as ſo many Slaves, were generally accuſtom'd to: And the Prophet had ſome Reaſon to draw a King in thoſe black Colours, becauſe the *Iſraelites* deſir'd ſuch a one as their Neighbours had, who were all under the abſolute Dominion of their Princes. *Le Clerc*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† It is generally ſuppos'd, that what made the *Iſraelites* ſo urgent at this Time for a King, was a preſent Streight, they thought themſelves in, for Want of an able Leader: For *Nahaſh*, the King of the *Amorites* coming up to *Jabeſh-Gilead*,

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all theſe Remonſtrances avail'd nothing: The People perſiſt in their Deſire of a King, and God tells *Samuel*, that he will not fail to give them one.

Saul *is appointed King over* Iſrael.

THE Appearance of Providence in the Election of their King was indeed very remarkable. *Saul*, the Son of *Kiſh*, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, was a very tall, handſome Youth; and it ſo happening at this Time, that ſome of his Father's Aſſes being gone aſtray, he, and a Servant along with him, were ſent to look for them. They wander'd about a great Way without gaining any Intelligence, till coming to *Ramah*, the Place of *Samuel*'s Reſidence, at his Servant's Inſtigation, he went to adviſe with him concerning the Aſſes. God had appriz'd *Samuel* with the Coming of the Perſon that Day, who was to be appointed King; and therefore *Samuel*, when he ſaw him, ſhew'd him all the Reſpect, that was due to his future Character. He took him with him † to the *High-Place*, where he was going to ſacrifice; he invited him to feaſt with him upon the Sacrifices, that were to be offer'd; and had invited thirty Gueſts more to bear him Company. He ſeated him in the higheſt Place, and diſtinguiſh'd him likewiſe by ordering the choiceſt Diſhes to be ſerv'd up to him. That Evening he had a long *Conference* with him in private, and the next Morning, as he was waiting on him out of Town, he order'd † the Servant to be ſent before, that he might acquaint him with God's Purpoſe of exalting him to the *regal* Dignity; and, having † anointed him to be King of *Iſrael*, he foretold him ſeveral † Events, which ſhould befal him, in his Return home,

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Gilead, and encamping before it, had put the Inhabitants into ſuch a Fright, that, without more to do, they offer'd to ſurrender upon Terms, telling him, that *they would become Subjects to him, if he would make a League with them*, 1 Sam. xi. 1. But the haughty *Amorite*, in Contempt of *Iſrael*, let them know, that, if he made a League with them, the Condition thereof ſhould be, *that they ſhould come out to him, and let him thruſt out all their right Eyes, and lay it for a Reproach upon all* Iſrael. The Elders of *Jabeſh*, in this ſad Circumſtance, demanded ſeven Days Reſpite, that they might ſend Meſſengers into all the Coaſts of *Iſrael*, and if in that Time no Succours arriv'd, they would ſubmit. This, it is thought, was the Reaſon for their preſſing ſo hard upon *Samuel* at this Time for a King; whereas their Duty was, to have enquir'd of the Lord (as they had done at other Times) who it was, that he would be pleas'd to conſtitute the *General* in this Exigence, to lead out their Forces againſt their Enemies. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

† In ſeveral Places of Scripture, the *Canaanites* are ſaid to have had their High-Places, whereon they worſhipp'd their *Idols*, but this is the firſt Inſtance of any belonging to the People of God; and 'tis the Opinion of ſome learned Men, that this Appointment of a *private* or *inferior* Place of Worſhip (even while the Ark and Tabernacle were in Being) by ſo great an Authority, as that of *Samuel*, gave Riſe to the Inſtitution of *Synagogues*, and *Proſeuchas* in ſo many Places of the Kingdom afterwards. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† This was with Deſign to let *Saul* underſtand, that what he was going to do was by the Divine Order and Appointment; and that, when it ſhould come to the caſting of Lots, (as it did afterwards, 1 *Sam.* x. 20.) he might perceive, that he was choſen King by Chance of a Lot. There might be likewiſe this further Reaſon for *Samuel*'s bidding *Saul* to ſend away his Servant, *viz.* leſt the People, ſuſpecting *Samuel* to do this by his own Will, more than by God's Appointment, might be inclinable to mutiny. Since this royal Unction then was only deſign'd for *Saul*'s private Satisfaction, it was neceſſary not to have it publiſh'd, before the People had proceeded to a publick Election of their King. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

† We read of no expreſs Command for the anointing of Kings, and yet it is plain, from the Parable of *Jotham*, Judg. ix. 8. that this was a Cuſtom two hundred Years before this Time. Why Oil, rather than any other Liquid, was the Symbol of conveying a regal Authority, we are no where inform'd. 'Tis true, that God directed *Moſes* to conſecrate *Aaron* to the High Prieſt's Office, by anointing his Head with Oil, *Exod.* xxix. 7. But the anointing of Kings, we may preſume, was of a *prior* Date. *Unction* indeed, in the Days of *Jacob*, was the common Method of ſetting apart from common Uſe even Things inanimate, *Gen.* xxviii. 18. and therefore it may well be ſuppos'd, that Perſons of ſuch Deſignation, as Kings were, were all along admitted by the ſame Ceremony, which might be of Divine Appointment, perhaps at the firſt Inſtitution of Government, in the *Antediluvian* World, and thence handed down, by a long *Tradition*, to future Generations. This Rite of Unction, in ſhort, was ſo much the Divine Care, that we find God giving *Moſes* a Preſcription how to make the conſecrating Oil, *Exod.* xxx. 23. But tho' *Solomon* was anointed with Oil taken from the *Tabernacle*, yet ſince *Samuel* was no Prieſt, and could not therefore have Acceſs to the Tabernacle, which at this Time was at ſome Diſtance from him, it is more reaſonable to think (tho' ſome *Jewiſh* Doctors will have it otherwiſe) that what he made uſe of, upon this Occaſion, was no more than common Oil. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The Events, which *Samuel* told *Saul* he ſhould meet with in his Return home, were theſe:——That, near *Rachel*'s Tomb, he ſhould meet two Men, who ſhould inform him, that his Father's Aſſes were found again; that,

departing

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

home, in Token of the Truth of his Deſignation to that Office.

THUS *Saul* was appointed King, but then it was only between *Samuel* and himſelf. To make his Choice and Inauguration therefore more publick, *Samuel* called an Aſſembly of the People together at *Mizpeh*, to which Place the Ark of the Lord was brought, that they might with more Solemnity proceed to the Election of a King. The Method of their electing was this:——Firſt, the Lot was caſt for every Tribe ſeparately, to know out of which the King was to be choſen, and the Lot fell upon that of *Benjamin*: Next, it was caſt for all the Families of this Tribe, and fell upon that of *Mitri*: And laſtly, it was caſt for all the Perſons of this Family, and fell upon *Saul*, the Son of *Kiſh*, who, when he came into the Aſſembly, (for he choſe to be abſent at the Time of the Election) and had been recommended by *Samuel* in a ſhort Speech upon that Occaſion, appear'd ſo portly, and with ſo much Majeſty, that he gain'd the Affections and good Wiſhes of all, except ſome few diſorderly Perſons, who diſapprov'd of the Choice, and (in pure Contempt) refus'd to † make him the uſual Preſents; which *Saul* could not but perceive, tho', in Point of Prudence, he thought proper, at that Time, † to overlook it. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

SAUL had not been many Days upon the Throne, before there happen'd a fit Occaſion for him to exert himſelf. *Nahaſh*, King of the *Ammonites*, laid Siege to † *Jabeſh-Gilead* on the other Side of *Jordan*, and had ſo cloſely begirt it, that the People offer'd to capitulate; but on no better Conditions would he permit them, than that each Man ſhould have † *his Right Eye* *And conquers the cruel King of the* Ammonites.

departing thence, he would meet three Men going to *Bethel*, one of them carrying three Kids, another three Cakes of Bread, and the third a Bottle of Wine, and that they ſhould give him two Parts thereof; and that, when he came to *Geba*, (which was commonly called *the Hill of God*) where there was a Garriſon of the *Philiſtines*, he ſhould meet a Company of Prophets going into the City, where the Spirit of God ſhould fall upon him, and he (to the Wonder of all, that ſhould hear him) ſhould begin to propheſy among them: All which Signs happen'd exactly as *Samuel* had foretold them, 1 *Sam.* x. 2, *&c.*

† It was a conſtant Cuſtom among the *eaſtern* Nations, and is even to this Day, whenever they approach'd the Prince, to preſent him with ſomething: But here, in the Caſe of *Saul*, at his firſt Acceſſion to the Throne, it was the proper Method of recognizing him. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe ſays, that *they did not come to ſalute him, or wiſh him an happy Reign:* But this is the ſame Thing, becauſe the firſt Salutation offer'd to a King, was always attended with Preſents, which carry'd with them a Sign of Peace and Friendſhip, of Congratulation and Joy, and of Subjection and Obedience. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† In this *Saul* acted a very wiſe and politick Part, as being unwilling to begin his Reign with any Diſorder or Tumult, which his juſt Reſentment of ſuch an Affront might perhaps have occaſion'd. Theſe *Sons of Belial* (as they are term'd) were, very likely, Perſons of ſome Rank and Quality, and therefore they deſpis'd *Saul*, for his having been related to a ſmall Tribe, and ſprung from an obſcure Family. If then he had taken Notice of this Affront, and not reveng'd it, he had ſhewn himſelf *mean-ſpirited*; and if he had reſented it as it deſerv'd, he might both have provok'd a Party againſt him, and, at firſt ſetting out, incurr'd the Cenſure of Raſhneſs and Cruelty: A Prejudice, which, in the future Courſe of his Reign, would have been far from doing him any good. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

† This Town lay on the Eaſt Side of *Jordan*, and not far diſtant from the *Ammonites*, who beſieg'd it. It was in Being in the Time of *Euſebius* and St *Jerom*, and was ſituate upon a Hill about ſix Miles diſtant from *Pella*, as one goes to *Geraſa*. It is ſometimes in Scripture ſimply called *Jabeſh*, and what the Inhabitants thereof are farther remarkable for, is ——— their grateful Remembrance of the Benefits, they had receiv'd from *Saul*, when, after his Death, having heard, that the *Philiſtines had faſtened his Body to the Wall of* Bethſhan, *they went all Night, and took the Body of* Saul, *and the Bodies of his Sons from the Wall, and came to* Jabeſh, *and burnt them there, and took their Bones, and buried them under a Tree at* Jabeſh, *and faſted ſeven Days*; for which they were highly commended by *David*, 2 Sam. ii. 5. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

† The Reaſon why *Nahaſh* was for having their right Eyes put out, was not only to bring a *Reproach upon* Iſrael, as himſelf declares, but to diſable them likewiſe from ſerving in War; for, as the Manner of fighting in thoſe Days was chiefly with Bow and Arrow, Sword and Shield, the Loſs of the Right-Eye made them incapable of either; becauſe, in Combat, the left Eye is cover'd with the Shield, and in ſhooting with the Bow, 'tis uſual to wink with it, ſo that depriving them of their Right-Eye made them uſeleſs in War: And yet this barbarous King thought it not proper to put out both their Eyes; for then he would have made them utterly incapable of doing him the Service, or acquiring the Tribute for him, which he expected from them. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

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Eye put out. Hereupon they ſent to *Gibeah* to demand Aid of King *Saul* † in the Space of ſeven Days, (for that was all the Time allow'd them) and he, having ſummon'd all *Iſrael* to come to their Aſſiſtance upon Pain of Death, in a very ſhort Time had an Army of three hundred Thouſand *Iſraelites*, beſides thirty Thouſand of the Tribe of *Judah*, and with theſe he promis'd to relieve the *Beſieg'd* the very next Day. Nor was he worſe than his Word: For, dividing his Army into three Parts, and falling upon the *Beſiegers* about Break of Day, he ſo totally routed and diſpers'd them, that ſcarce two of them were left together.

THIS Victory, † and the Deliverance which it procur'd from a barbarous and inſulting Enemy, rais'd their new King's Fame to ſuch a Degree, that ſome, remembring the Indignities that were put upon him at his *Coronation*, were (in the Height of their Zeal) for having them *now* puniſh'd with Death; but *Saul* very prudently oppos'd the Motion, and expreſs'd his Averſion to have the Glories of that Day ſully'd with the Blood of any of his Subjects.

FROM this Victory however *Samuel* took Occaſion to give thoſe, who had hitherto refus'd their Allegiance, an Opportunity of coming in, and *recognizing* the King; and for that Purpoſe order'd a general Meeting at *Gilgal* to confirm *Saul*'s Election; which accordingly was celebrated with Mirth and Joy between both King and People, as well as with Sacrifices and Thankſgivings to God, as the Author of all their Succeſſes. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

SAMUEL was, at this Time, to reſign the Government entirely into the Hands of *Saul*; and therefore in the Speech, which he made upon this Occaſion, he inſiſted not a little upon the Vindication of his own Adminiſtration. He reminded them of the great Tranſgreſſions, which they and their Forefathers had committed; he ſet before them the Bleſſings conſequent upon their Obedience, and the Judgments, which would certainly attend their Diſobedience to the Laws of God; he gave them to underſtand, that they had been * far from doing an acceptable Thing to God, in rejecting his Government, and deſiring a King; and (that they might not think, that he mention'd this out of any Prejudice, or indeed without a divine Direction) he gave them this Sign:—— That Samuel's *Speech upon the Reſignation of the Government.*

† It may ſeem a little ſtrange, that this barbarous Prince ſhould be willing to allow the *Jabeſhites* the Reſpite of ſeven Days, but *Joſephus* aſſigns this Reaſon for it, *viz.* that he had ſo mean an Opinion of the People, that he made no Difficulty to comply with their Requeſt. *Saul* indeed had been appointed King, but having not as yet taken upon him the Government, he liv'd, juſt as he did before, in a private Condition, 1 *Sam.* xi. 5. So that had he, upon this Notice, endeavour'd to levy an Army, he could ſcarce think it poſſible to be done, in ſo ſhort a Space as ſeven Days; and therefore he thought he might grant them theſe Conditions without any Danger, and without driving them to Deſperation, as he might have done, had he denied them their Requeſt. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† *Joſephus* acquaints us, that *Saul* did not content himſelf with barely relieving *Jabeſh*, but carry'd on a War againſt the *Ammonites*, ſlew their King, laid waſte their Country, enrich'd his Army with Spoils, and brought the People ſafe and victorious to their Homes again. *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. c. 6.

* That Part of the Speech, which *Joſephus* introduces *Samuel*, as making to the People, and complaining of their Importunity for a Change of Government, is conceiv'd in theſe Terms:——"What ſhould you chuſe another "King for, after the Experience of ſo many ſignal Mercies, and miraculous Deliverances, while you were under "God's Protection, and own'd him for your Governor? You have forgotten the Story of your Foreſather *Jacob*'s "coming into *Egypt* with only ſeventy Men in his Train, and purely for Want of Bread; how God provided for "them, and, by his Bleſſing, how they increas'd and multiply'd. You have forgotten the Slavery and Oppreſſion, "they groan'd under, till, upon their Cries and Supplications for Relief, God reſcu'd them himſelf, without the "Help of Kings, by the Hands of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, who brought them out of *Egypt* into the Land you are now "poſſeſs'd of. How can you then be ſo ungrateful now, after ſo many Bleſſings and Benefits receiv'd, as to depart "from the Reverence and Allegiance you owe to ſo powerful and ſo merciful a Protector? How often have you "been deliver'd up into the Hands of your Enemies for your Apoſtacy and Diſobedience, and as often afterward re-"ſtor'd to God's Favour, and your Liberty, upon your Humiliation and Repentance? Who was it but God, that gave "you Victory firſt over the *Aſſyrians*, then over the *Ammonites*, and then over the *Moabites*, and laſt of all over the "*Philiſtines*, not by the Influence and Direction of Kings, but under the Conduct of *Jephthah* and *Gideon*? What "Madneſs has poſſeſs'd you then, to abandon an *heavenly* Governor for an *earthly*, &c." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. c. 6.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

That God would immediately ſend a Storm of Thunder and Rain, which, in the † Time of *Wheat Harveſt* (as it was then) was a Thing very unuſual; and this coming to paſs according to his Prediction, ſo terrify'd the People, that they acknowledg'd their Offence, and intreated *Samuel* to intercede for them; which he not only promis'd them to do, but to aſſiſt them likewiſe with his beſt Inſtructions, ſo long as they adher'd to the Obſervation of God's Laws; but if they deſpis'd them, they were to expect to be deſtroy'd, *both they and their King.*

Saul's *Victory over the* Philiſtines.

After this Victory over the *Ammonites*, *Saul*, in the ſecond Year of his Reign, diſbanded all his Army, except three Thouſand Men, two of which he kept for his Body-Guard, and the other Thouſand were to attend his Son *Jonathan*; who, being a Prince of great Bravery, had taken an Opportunity, and cut off a Garriſon of the *Philiſtines* in † *Geba*, which in Effect was a Declaration of War. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

The *Philiſtines*, upon this Occaſion, rais'd a very powerful Army, which conſiſted of ‡ three Thouſand Chariots, ſix Thouſand Horſe, and a Multitude of Foot almoſt innumerable, and came and encamp'd at ‡ *Michmaſh*. The *Iſraelitiſh* Army, which was to *rendevouz* at *Gilgal*, came in but very ſlowly, and of thoſe that did, ſeveral were ſo faint-hearted, as to hide themſelves in the Rocks and Caves; and others, thinking themſelves never ſafe enough, retir'd even beyond the *Jordan*. The Truth is, that both Prince and People were ſadly intimidated, becauſe *Samuel*, whoſe Company at this Juncture was impatiently expected, was not yet come; ſo that the King, fearing that the Enemy would fall upon him before he had made his Addreſſes to God for Succeſs, order'd Sacrifices to be made; and the Burnt-Offering

† It is an Obſervation of St *Jerom*, that this Harveſt in *Judea* began about the End of *June*, or the Beginning of *July*, in which Seaſon Thunder and Rain was never known, but only in the Spring and Autumn, the one called *the former*, and the other *the latter Rain*; and therefore *Samuel* by this Preamble, *Is it not Wheat Harveſt to Day?* Chap. xii. 17. meant to ſignify the Greatneſs of the Miracle, God was going to work; that he could in an Inſtant, and in a Time, when they leaſt of all expected it, deprive them of all the Comforts of Life, as they juſtly deſerv'd, for their rejecting him, and his Prophet, who was ſo powerful with him, as, by his Prayers to produce ſuch Wonders. *Patrick's*, *Calmet's*, and *Le Clerc's* Commentaries.

† Among the Cities of *Benjamin*, mention'd in *Joſhua* xviii. 24, &c. we read of *Gaba*, *Gibeah*, and *Gibeon*; and in *Joſhua* xxi. 17. we read, that the two Cities, given to the Children of *Aaron*, out of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, were *Gibeon* and *Geba*; whence it is not to be doubted, but that *Gaba*, mention'd in the xviiith Chapter, was the ſame with *Geba*, that we read of in Chap. xxi. But then it will no ways follow, that this *Geba*, or *Gaba*, is the ſame with *Gibeah*, becauſe this *Gibeah* was the royal City, where *Saul* dwelt, and is therefore expreſsly called *Gibeah of* Saul; and for that Reaſon it cannot be ſuppos'd, that the *Philiſtines*, at this Time, had a Garriſon there. *Wells's* Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

‡ The Words in the Original, and in our Tranſlation, are *thirty Thouſand*; but the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Verſions (which we have thought proper to follow) make them no more than *three Thouſand*: And indeed whoever conſiders, that *Pharaoh*, King of *Egypt*, when he had muſter'd all his Forces together, could bring no more than ſix hundred of theſe Chariots into the Field, and all the other Princes, whoſe Equipages are related in Scripture, much fewer, muſt needs think it a Thing incredible, that the *Philiſtines*, out of their ſmall Territories, which extended no farther, than the two Tribes of *Simeon* and *Dan*, along the Coaſts of the *Mediterranean-Sea*, could ever be able to raiſe ſo vaſt an Armament; no, nor all the Nations, that they could poſſibly call in to their Aſſiſtance. For beſides that, in the Account of all Armies, the *Cavalry* is always more numerous than the Chariots of War, (which is different here) the largeſt Armies, that we ever read of, were able to compaſs a very few of theſe Chariots, in Compariſon of the Number here ſpecify'd. *Mithridates*, in his vaſt Army, had but a *hundred*; *Darius* but *two*; and *Antiochus Epiphanes* (2 Mac. xiii. 2.) but *three*. So that we muſt either ſay, that the Tranſcribers made a Miſtake in the *Hebrew* Copy, or (with ſome other Commentators) ſuppoſe, that this *thirty Thouſand Chariots*, were not *Chariots of War*, but moſt of them Carriages only, for the Conveyance of the Baggage belonging to ſuch a vaſt Multitude of Men, or for the Deportation of the Plunder, they hop'd to be Maſters of by having conquer'd the Country. *Le Clerc's* Commentary, and Univerſal Hiſtory.

‡ *Euſebius* and St *Jerom* inform us, that in their Time, there was a large Town of this Name, lying about nine Miles from *Jeruſalem*, near *Ramah*; and the Text tells us, that it was *eaſtward from* Beth-aven. Now *Beth-aven*, which ſignifies *the Houſe of Iniquity*, is ſuppos'd to be the ſame with *Bethel*, and was ſo called, after that *Jeroboam*, the Son of *Nebat*, had ſet up his golden Calves to be worſhipp'd here: But, as *Bethel* lay to the Eaſt of *Michmaſh*, and not *Michmaſh* to the Eaſt of *Bethel*, as the Text ſeems to ſay, the Tranſlation ſhould be, that they encamp'd at *Michmaſh*, *having Beth-aven on the Eaſt*, i. e. they ſeiz'd on that Poſt, which *Saul* had before in *Michmaſh*, *on Mount* Bethel, Ver. 2. *Calmet's* Commentary.

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fering was juſt finiſh'd, when News was brought him, that *Samuel* was arriv'd.

SAMUEL had told him beforehand, that, by the Expiration of ſeven Days, he would not fail to meet him at *Gilgal*; and therefore, being offended at his Diffidence and Impatience, he not only ſharply rebuk'd him, but declar'd likewiſe that God, by this Way of Proceeding, would in Time be provok'd to remove the Kingdom from him and his Poſterity, and give it to another, that better deſerv'd it; and ſo, having left *Gilgal*, he went to *Gibeah*, whither *Saul* and his Son *Jonathan* follow'd him, with a ſmall Army of about ſix Thouſand, and theſe ſo badly provided for Action, that they had no Manner of Weapons, but what they could make out of their *working Tools*, becauſe the *Philiſtines* would not, at that Time, * permit ſo much as a Smith to live among them. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

WHILE the *Philiſtine* Army lay at *Michmaſh*, they ſent out Parties ſeveral Ways to ravage the Country, and met with no Manner of Oppoſition; till *Jonathan*, accompany'd with † his Armour-Bearer only, found Means to aſcend a ſteep Rock, where the Enemy leaſt of all expected an Invaſion, and ſo falling upon them unawares, in a ſhort Time, killed about twenty of them; which put the reſt † into ſuch a Conſternation, that, miſtruſting Friends for Foes, they began to ſlaughter and deſtroy one another. *Saul* had ſoon Intelligence of this Diſorder in the Enemy's Camp,

* The Precaution which the *Philiſtines* took to hinder the *Iſraelites* from providing themſelves with Weapons, is no more than what other Conquerors have done to the Nations they have vanquiſh'd. *Porſenna*, when he made Peace with the *Romans*, reſtrain'd them from the Uſe of all Iron, but what was neceſſary in the Tillage of their Ground. *Cyrus*, when he ſubdu'd the *Lydians*, for Fear of a Revolt, took from them the Uſe of Arms, and, inſtead of a laborious Life ſpent in War, ſuffer'd them to ſink into Softneſs and Luxury, ſo that they ſoon loſt their ancient Valour: And (to inſtance in one Prince more) *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he had made himſelf Maſter of *Judea*, took along with him into *Babylon, all the Craftſmen and Smiths*, that the *pooreſt of the People, which he left* behind, might be in no Condition to rebel, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 14. The only Wonder is, why the *Iſraelites*, after they had regain'd their Liberty, under the Government of *Samuel*, and given the *Philiſtines* ſo total an Overthrow at *Eben-ezer*, did not reſtore theſe Artificers, and ſo provide themſelves with proper Arms againſt the next Occaſion? But, beſides the extream Sloth and Negligence, which appears in the *Iſraelites* whole Conduct during this Period, it was not ſo eaſy a Matter, in ſo ſhort a Time, to recover a Trade that was loſt; eſpecially among a People, that had no *Iron Mines*, and were ſo wholly addicted to the Feeding of Cattle, that they made no Account of any *mechanical* Arts. In the famous Victory, which they gain'd over *Siſera*, we are told, that *there was not a Shield or Spear ſeen among fifty Thouſand Men of* Iſrael, *Judg.* v. 8. but, notwithſtanding this, they had Bows, and Arrows, and Slings, which the Men of *Gibeah* could manage to a wonderful Advantage, *Judg* xx. 16. And beſides theſe, the *Iſraelites*, upon this Occaſion, might convert their Inſtruments of Huſbandry, their Hatchets, their Spades, their Forks, their Mattocks, *&c.* into Inſtruments of War; a much better Shift than what we read of ſome, who, in ancient Times, had no other Arms than Clubs, and ſharpen'd Stakes, harden'd in the Fire.

——— Non jam certamine agreſti
Stipitibus duris agitur, Sudibuſque præuſtis. VIRGIL, Æneid 7.

† This Action of *Jonathan*'s, conſider'd in itſelf, was doubtleſs a very raſh Attempt, and contrary to the Laws of War, which prohibit all under Command (as he was) from engaging the Enemy, or entring upon any Enterprize without the *General*'s Order; but what may very juſtly be ſaid in Excuſe of it is,——That he had a Divine Incitation to it, which he might probably feel, upon the Sight of the *Philiſtines* appearing as if they intended to aſſault *Gibeah*, and upon the Information, which he might receive, of the great Spoil which the *three Parties* made of the poor People in the Country. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† How two Men could put the whole Army into ſuch a Conſternation, may ſeem ſomewhat extraordinary; but it ſhould be conſider'd, that *Jonathan* and his Armour-bearer, climbing up a Way, that was never attempted before, might come upon them unawares, and ſurprize them; that this Action might happen (as *Joſephus* thinks) early in the Morning, when a great Part of the *Philiſtines* Army was aſleep; that even, had they been all awake, *Jonathan* might have ſo poſted himſelf, (as *Horatius Cocles* did on a Bridge) as to be able to maintain his Paſs againſt all the Force of the Enemy; that thoſe, who made at him, (as only one perhaps could come at a Time) he with one Stroke might lay flat on the Ground, and his Armour-bearer immediately diſpatch them; that the reſt, ſeeing them act thus intrepidly, might take them for two Scouts, or *Vancurriers* only of a great Army, that was coming up, and ready to fall upon them; that the Army of the *Philiſtines*, being made up of different Nations, might be in the greater Confuſion, as either not underſtanding, or elſe ſuſpecting one another; and (what might compleat their Conſternation) that God, at this Time, might ſend a *panick Fear* upon them, which, whenever he does it, (even in the Opinion of *Heathens* themſelves) is enough to make the Stouteſt tremble, and the moſt heroick Spirits betake themſelves to Flight.

Ἐν γὰρ δαιμονίοισι φόβοις
Φεύγοῦσι καὶ παῖδες Θεῶν. PIND. Nemea 9.

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Camp, and therefore, willing to make the moſt of ſuch an Opportunity, he got together what Forces he could, and fell upon the *Philiſtines* with ſuch Fury, that he totally routed and defeated them.

IN the Heat of the Chaſe, he caus'd Proclamation to be made, that (upon Pain of Death) none ſhould dare to eat any Thing until it was Night, that the Slaughter of the Enemy might not be retarded. But herein he defeated his own Purpoſe; for the People, for Want of Refreſhment, grew faint in the Purſuit, ſo that the Enemy eſcap'd into their own Country: And (what was another grievous Conſequence of this *Interdict*) his Son *Jonathan*, who had been abſent, when the Proclamation was made, had like to have fallen a Sacrifice to his Father's *raſh Vow*, * merely for eating a little Honey, when he was ready to die with Hunger, had not the People interpos'd, and pleaded the Merit of that young Prince to whom the Honour of the Day was chiefly owing.

AFTER this Victory, *Saul* rul'd the Kingdom with an higher Hand, and repuls'd his Enemies wherever they aſſail'd him. He had indeed a very large and flouriſhing Family. *Ahinoam*, the Daughter of *Ahimaaz*, was his Wife; *Jonathan*, *Iſhui*, and *Melchiſhua* were his Sons; *Michal* and *Merab* his Daughters; *Abner*, his Couſin-german, was *General* of his Forces; and, as himſelf was a warlike Prince, God made choice of him to put in Execution a Sentence, *(b)* which, many Years before, he had decreed againſt the *Amalekites*, for their oppoſing the *Iſraelites* in their Paſſage out of the Land of *Egypt*. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

HIS Commiſſion was utterly to deſtroy the *Amalekites*, Men, Women, and Children, and to leave not ſo much as one Creature of any Kind alive: But, inſtead of executing this according to the *Letter* of the Precept, * he ſav'd *Agag* their King, and the beſt of the Cattle alive; and when *Samuel* came to expoſtulate the Matter with him, his Pretence was, that what he had ſpar'd was in pure Reſpect to God, in order to have them offer'd to him in Sacrifice. But *Samuel*, who knew very well, that this *Reſerve* was made out of a Principle of *Avarice*, more than *Devotion*, firſt laid before him the Iniquity of his Conduct, and then declar'd to him God's immoveable Purpoſe of alienating the Kingdom from his Family; which made ſo deep an Impreſſion upon him, that he acknowledg'd his Fault, intreated the Prophet (who was going abruptly to leave him) to ſtay, and make Interceſſion for him, and ſo far to honour him *before the People*, (from whom he apprehended a *Revolt*) as to join with him in Worſhip to God, which *Samuel* conſented to do: But, before he departed, he order'd *Agag* (who by this Time began to hope for Mercy) to be brought forth to him, and himſelf, with his own Hands, fell upon him, and ſlew him. *And over the* Amalekites; *but his Diſobedience, in not deſtroying them all.*

THIS was the laſt Interview, which *Samuel* had with *Saul*; for, after this Action, David *is anointed King in his Stead.*

* When *Saul* told his Son *Jonathan*, that, for eating this Honey, contrary to his Interdict, he ſhould ſurely die, *becauſe the Reverence, which he had for his Vow, was more to him than all the Kindred and Tenderneſs of Nature*, *Joſephus* introduces the Son making his Father an Anſwer, not unlike that which *Jephthah*'s Daughter, upon a like Occaſion, return'd to him: "That Death, *ſays he*, ſhall be welcome to me, which acquits my Father of the Obligation of a "religious Vow, and only befals me, in Conſequence of ſo glorious a Victory to him, that gave me Being. I have "liv'd long enough, ſince I have liv'd to ſee the Pride and Inſolence of the *Philiſtines* brought down by the *He*-"*brews*, which will ſerve me for a Conſolation in all my other Sufferings." And the Hiſtorian tells us farther, that the whole Multitude was ſo charm'd with the Piety and Bravery of the young Man, that, in an Extaſy of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, they took him away out of the Hands of his incens'd Father, with an Oath, *that they would not ſuffer an Hair of that Perſon's Head to be touched, who had been ſo inſtrumental in a Victory, that tended to the Preſervation of them all.* Antiq. lib. vi. c. 7.

(b) Vid. Exod. xvii. 8, &c. and Deut. xxv. 17, &c.

* *Joſephus* ſeems to hint, that *Saul* ſav'd this *Amalekite* King alive, becauſe he was taken with the Comelineſs and Majeſty of his Perſon; but others rather think, that he intended him to decorate his Triumph. For when it is ſaid of *Saul*, that he came to *Carmel* after this Victory, and *ſet him up a Place*, 1 Sam. xv. 12. the Word *Jad*, they ſay, will ſignify an *Arch*, as well as any Thing elſe; and thence they conclude, that *Saul*'s Purpoſe was to erect a triumphal Arch, in Memory of his Defeat of the *Amalekites*; and that he kept their King alive, to be led captive in that magnificent Proceſſion, wherein he was to make a Diſplay of his Victory. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

21 JAN 61
FEB

Then Samuel took the horn of oyl, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the
P.59. *spirit of the Lord came upon David, from that day forward*; I. Sam[l]. Chap: 16. Ver: 13.

Raphael Urbin Inv.

S.F. Pannet Direx.

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Action, he retir'd to his Houſe at *Ramah*, where (tho' he viſited *Saul* no more) he ceas'd not to lament the ſad Condition, into which he was fallen. It was not long however before God awoke him out of his *penſive* Mood, and ſent him to *Bethlehem*, under Colour of ſacrificing there, to anoint *David*, the Son of *Jeſſe*, King and Succeſſor to *Saul*. *Jeſſe* had eight Sons, and, when *Samuel* came to his Houſe, ſeven of them were brought before him. *Eliab*, the eldeſt, was a goodly Perſonage, and him the Prophet ſuppos'd at firſt Sight to have been the Perſon, whom God had pitch'd upon to ſucceed *Saul*; but being inſtructed otherwiſe, and, upon Enquiry, finding that *Jeſſe* had another Son, who, at that Time, was in the Fields keeping the Sheep, he order'd him to be ſent for; and, as he was a very fair and beautiful Youth, immediately upon his entering the Room, he perceiv'd, that he was the Perſon, whom God had made Choice of; and, accordingly, he took an Opportunity, and ‡ ſingling him out from the reſt of his Brethren, pour'd Oil on his Head, and anointed him King. Nor was the Ceremony uſeleſs; for, from that Time forward, *David* found himſelf inwardly poſſeſs'd with a Spirit of Wiſdom, and Prudence, and Courage, and other Qualifications both of Body and Mind, that are requiſite in a Prince *.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Saul *grows Melancholy, and ſends for* David *to play to him.*

SAUL, in the mean Time, declin'd more and more in the Favour of God; and as he was naturally of a timorous and ſuſpicious Temper, an unhappy Turn of Mind grew upon him, and ſettled at laſt in a confirm'd *Melancholy*, but ſuch an one, as was frequently attended with violent Perturbations, and ſometimes with direct Frenzy. In this Condition, ſome of his Courtiers advis'd him to *Muſick*, which would be of ſome Uſe to lull his diſturb'd Mind to Reſt; and accordingly recommended *David*, not only as an excellent Maſter this Way, but a Man of other rare Qualifications, both *internal* and *external*, enough to engage his Favour.

UPON this Recommendation he was ſent for to Court, where *Saul* was greatly taken with the Beauty of his Perſon; but, when he heard him exerciſe his Skill upon the *Harp*, he was pleas'd above meaſure, and quite tranſported from all uneaſy and melancholick Thoughts. *Saul*, in ſhort, conceiv'd ſuch a Kindneſs for *David* for having cur'd him of his Malady, that he made him one of his *Armour-bearers*, tho' *David*, when he found the King better, return'd to his Father's Houſe again.

David *ſlays the Champion* Goliah.

THE *Philiſtines* not long before had receiv'd a remarkable Defeat from *Saul*; but, having now recruited their Forces, they came and encamp'd between † *Succoth*

‡ Our Tranſlation ſays, that *Samuel anointed him in the Midſt of his Brethren*, and for this it is pretended, that, as this Unction was a ſolemn Act, and the only Title which *David* had to the Kingdom, it was neceſſary to have it done in the Preſence of ſome Witneſſes, for which Purpoſe none were more proper, than thoſe of his own Family. But it is plain, from his Brother *Eliab*'s treating him after this, (1 *Sam.* xvii. 28.) that he was not privy to his being anointed King *elect* over God's People; and therefore, ſince the Words will equally bear the Senſe of *from* the Midſt, as well as *in* the Midſt of his Brethren, it is more reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that, as this was the *Ceremony* of his Deſignation to the Kingdom only, few or none (except his Father perhaps) were admitted to it. And there was the leſs Reaſon for Witneſſes upon this Occaſion, becauſe *David* never laid claim to the Crown till after *Saul*'s Deceaſe, and was then, at two ſeveral Times, 1ſt, When he was made King over the Tribe of *Judah*, and 2d, when made King over all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, anointed publickly. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries, and *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

* They, who credit the Scripture-Hiſtory in this Affair, will eaſily account for theſe extraordinary Accompliſhments and Improvements; for That aſſures us, *that the Spirit of the Lord came upon* David *from that Day forward*, 1 Sam. xvi. 13. and I ſhould be glad to learn from thoſe, who do not credit this Circumſtance of the Hiſtory in the ſtrict Senſe of the Text, how otherwiſe they can account for theſe extraordinary Effects and Endowments, which immediately enſu'd *David*'s Deſignation to the Throne; how a Deſignation to Empire, *I ſay*, which, in its ordinary Courſe, is too apt to corrupt, debaſe, and overſet with Vanity, ſhould raiſe an obſcure Youth, uneducated, and little accounted of even in the Eſteem of a Parent's Partiality, in an obſcure Age and Country, without the Advantage either of Inſtruction or Example, into the greateſt *Muſician*, the nobleſt *Poet*, and the moſt conſummate *Hero* of all Antiquity. The Life of *David*, by the Author of *Revelation examined*.

† *Succoth* and *Azekah* lay to the *South* of *Jeruſalem*, and the *Eaſt* of *Bethlehem*, about four Leagues from the *former*, and five from the *latter*; and the antient Valley of *Elah* muſt conſequently lie not far diſtant from them, though later *Travellers* place it at no more than a League's Diſtance from *Jeruſalem*. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

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coth and *Azekah*, while *Saul*, with his Army, took Ground upon the Hill, that is above the Valley of *Elah*, which ſeparated the two Camps. While the Armies lay thus facing each other, a Champion nam'd *Goliah*, of a prodigious *gigantick* Stature, * being full ten Feet high, with Arms, and Armour proportionable, came out of the Camp of the *Philiſtines* for forty Days ſucceſſively, and challeng'd any one of the *Iſraelites* to a ſingle Combat. * This *ſingle Combat* was to decide the Fate of the War: But none of the *Iſraelites* durſt adventure upon it, until *David*, who happen'd at this Time to come to the Camp, † with Proviſions for his three elder Brethren, that were then in the Service, ſeeing this great gigantick Creature thus vaunt himſelf, and hearing withal what Reward the King had promis'd to the Perſon, that ſhould kill him, *viz.* that he † would give him his Daughter in Marriage and ennoble his Family, was mov'd by a divine Impulſe to accept of the Challenge, which he ſome ways diſcover'd to the Standers-by. His eldeſt Brother *Eliab*, hearing ſuch Words drop from him, took him, and reprov'd him for his Raſhneſs; but, as his Declaration, by this Time, had reach'd the King's Ears, the King ſent for him, and, having ſurvey'd his Youth, told him with Concern, that he fear'd he would never be able to encounter a Man, that was ſo much older,

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

* The Words in the Text are, ——— *Whoſe Height was ſix Cubits and a Span*; ſo that, taking a *Cubit* to be twenty Inches and a half, and a Span to be three Inches, and a little more, the whole will amount to about twelve Feet and an half: A Stature above as tall again as uſual! The loweſt Computation of the Cubit however brings it to near *ten Feet*, which is the Standard that we have ſet it at; though it muſt not be diſſembled, that both the *Septuagint* and *Joſephus* have reduc'd it to little more than *eight Feet*, which but badly comports with the Weight and Vaſtneſs of his Armour, though it might ſuit their Deſign perhaps, in accommodating their Account to the Credibility of their *Heathen* Readers. But be that as it will, ſeveral Authors (to ſhew this vaſt Size of the Man not to be beyond the Bounds of Probability) have written *ex profeſſo de Gigantibus*; among whom *Harmannus Conringius*, in his Book *de antiquo Statu Holmſtadii*, and in another, *de Habitu Corporum Germanorum*, have demonſtrated, that the antient *Germans* were of a vaſt Size, even as *Cæſar*, *de Bello Gall.* teſtifies of them, by calling them, *immani Corporum Magnitudine Homines*, Men of a huge Greatneſs of Body. Nay, even *Joſephus* himſelf, who is quoted for denying the Exiſtence of Giants, furniſhes us with an Argument in their behalf, when he gives us an Account of ſome Bones of a prodigious Size, which were found in *Hebron*; as *Acoſta*, in his Hiſtory of the *Indies*, Lib. i. c. 10. makes mention of Bones of an incredible Bigneſs, and of a Race of Giants of ſuch an Height, that an ordinary Man could ſcarce reach their Knees. *Le Clerc*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries, *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Goliah*, and Diſſert. of the Giants.

* The Words in which *Goliah*'s Challenge is expreſs'd, are theſe: ——— *Why are you come out to ſet your Battle in Array? Am I not a* Philiſtine, *and you Servants to* Saul? *Chuſe you a Man for you, and let him come down to me: If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your Servants: But if I prevail againſt him, and kill him, then ſhall ye be our Servants, and ſerve us*, 1 Sam. xvii. 8. *Antiquity* furniſhes us with Examples of ſeveral ſuch like Combats, as *Goliah* here propoſes, but with none more remarkable, than that between the *Horatii* and *Curiatii*, related by *Livy*, lib. i. c. 23. "In which Caſe, (as *Grotius* expreſſes himſelf, *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, lib. ii. c. 23.) though "the Champions perhaps cannot, with all the Innocence imaginable, engage in the Combat, yet their reſpective "States may, at leaſt, allow of it, as a leſs Evil; as an Expedient, whereby a Deciſion is made (without the Effu-"ſion of much Blood, or any conſiderable Loſs on either Side) which of the two Nations ſhall have the Dominion "over the other. *Strabo*, *(ſays he)* makes mention of this, as an antient Cuſtom among the *Greeks*; and *Æneas* "appeals to the *Latins*, whether it is not highly juſt and equitable, that he and *Turnus* ſhould determine the Con-"troverſy between them in this Manner?" But whether ever there was any Combat, ſtipulated to be deciſive of the Quarrel between two contending Nations, 'tis certain, that this Speech of *Goliah*'s was a mere *Bravado*, proceeding from an high Opinion he had of his own matchleſs Strength, as if he had been the whole Support of the Nation, which was to ſtand or fall together with him. For, that he had no Authority from the Princes of the *Philiſtines*, to make any ſuch Declaration, is evident from the Event; ſince, ſo far were the *Philiſtines* from yielding themſelves Slaves to the *Hebrews* upon the Death of this Champion, that they made the beſt of their Way into their own Country, and there defended themſelves, and fought many Battles with them afterwards. *Saurin*'s Diſſert. Vol. IV. Diſſert. 32. and *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† In thoſe Days it was cuſtomary for Men to ſerve their King and Country in the Wars at their own Expence; and therefore *Jeſſe* ſent a Supply of Proviſions to ſuch of his Sons as were in the Service: But, ſince he had other Sons at Home, while *David* was chiefly in the Field, it ſeems to be a Divine Direction that he ſent him from the Sheep upon this Errand.

† This was no bad *Policy* in *Saul*, to promiſe largely upon ſo important an Occaſion, foraſmuch as *Caleb* won *Kirjath-ſepher*, by offering his Daughter in Marriage to the Perſon that ſhould take it; and *David* himſelf, when he came to the Crown, encourag'd his Soldiers to aſſault the ſtrong Fort of *Sion*, by promiſing to make him *Commander in chief* of all his Forces, who ſhould firſt enter it. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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David killeth Goliath.

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And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled. And David took the head of the Philistine, & brought it to Jerusalem. I Sam[l]: Chap: XVII. Ver: 51. 54.

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older, and ſtronger, and a Soldier from his Cradle. * But to this *David* reply'd, that he had already done as great Things, as killing this Giant could poſſibly be; that he had ſlain a Lion and a Bear with his bare Hands, and therefore did not doubt, but that the ſame Almighty Power, which deliver'd him then, would not fail to ſhield and protect him now.

SAUL was not a little pleas'd with this gallant Anſwer; and, to equip him, as well as he could, for the Combat, offer'd him his own Armour; but when *David* had put it on, he found it too large and cumberſome: And therefore taking only his Staff, a Sling, and † five ſmooth Stones, which he pick'd out of the Brook that ran by, he advanc'd towards the *Philiſtine*, who, perceiving him to be but a Youth, and of a fair effeminate Complexion, took the Thing, as done in Contempt and Deriſion of him; and therefore he curs'd him by his Gods, *Dagon* and *Aſhteroth*, and vow'd to cut him in Pieces, the very Moment he came at him. But *David*'s Reply was of another Kind, *viz.* that he came againſt him, not in any Confidence of his own Strength, but in the Name of that God, whoſe Name he had blaſphem'd, and Power defy'd: And with theſe Words he let fly a Stone at him with ſuch Force and Direction, that it hit him on his Forehead, and, † piercing his Brain, ſunk into it; ſo that he fell flat on his Face, and *David* ran up to him, and with the Giant's Sword cut off his Head; at the Sight of which the *Philiſtine* Army fled, and were purſu'd by the *Hebrews* as far as the Gates of *Ekron* with a very great Slaughter.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

WHEN *Saul* ſaw *David* marching againſt the *Philiſtine*, he requir'd of *Abner*, who he was? Which *Abner* could not reſolve him; but, upon his Return from Victory, introduc'd him to the King, with the Champion's Head in his Hand. The King receiv'd him with the higheſt Applauſes; and, upon his Enquiry, *David* inform'd him, that he was the Son of *Jeſſe the Bethlehemite*. Every one entertain'd indeed an high Conception for the Author of ſo great an Action, but none expreſs'd ſo entire a Satisfaction, as did *Jonathan*; who, being himſelf a Prince of extraordinary Bravery, was ſo taken with his Courage and Conduct in this Engagement, that he * contracted the tendereſt and moſt indearing Friendſhip with

Saul *grows jealous of* David, *and attempts his Life ſeveral Ways.*

* *Joſephus* introduces *David* as reaſoning with the King in this Manner: —— "*David*, perceiving, *ſays he*, "that *Saul* took his Meaſures from the common Reaſon of other Encounters, gave the King to underſtand, that *this* "*was not ſo much a Challenge to the Army, as a Defiance to Heaven itſelf*; *neither was the Combat to be taken, in Truth*, "*for a Trial of Skill between* Goliah *and* David, *but between* Goliah *and the* Lord of Hoſts *For it is not my Arm*, ſays "he, *that fights the Battle, but the Power of a gracious and invincible God, that many Times brings to paſs, even by the* "*weakeſt Inſtruments, the nobleſt of his Divine Purpoſes, for his greater Glory.*" Jewiſh Antiq. lib. vi. c. 10.

† *Smooth* Stones, one would think, part beſt from the Sling, and, as they meet with the leaſt Obſtruction from the Air, fly with the greateſt Rapidity, and in the moſt direct Line; and yet *Ludovicus de Dieu* is of a quite contrary Opinion, *viz.* that rough and ſharp Stones were properer for *David*'s Purpoſe; whereupon he tranſlates the Words, *five Pieces of Stone*, as the *Hebrew* indeed, without its Punctuation, will bear. But 'tis in vain to be nice and elaborate about Trifles, ſince, of what Form ſoever the Stone, which penetrated *Goliah*'s Forehead, was, 'tis plain, that it had both the *Direction*, and *Rapidity* of its Motion from the Hand of God.

† If it ſhould be aſk'd, how this could poſſibly be, when *Goliah* was arm'd ſo compleatly, and, in particular, is ſaid to have had an *Helmet of Braſs upon his Head?* 'Tis but ſuppoſing, that this arrogant Champion, in Diſdain of his inferior Combatant, might come negligently towards him, with his Helmet turn'd back, and his Forehead bare. 'Tis highly probable, that when he made his menacing Speech to *David*, he might turn back his Helmet, both to ſpeak, and be heard more diſtinctly; and there was no ſuch Terror in *David*'s Appearance, as might induce him to cover his Forehead again. But, admitted he did, 'tis but ſuppoſing, that *David* levell'd his Stone ſo right, as to hit the Place, which was left open for his Adverſary's Eyes, or threw it with ſuch a violent Force, as would penetrate both Helmet and Head together. To make theſe Suppoſitions more probable, we need only remember what we read in *Judges*, Ch. xx. 16. of no leſs than *ſeven hundred Men* in one Place, who were ſo expert with their Left Hands, that every one could ſling Stones to an Hair's Breadth, and not miſs; or what we read in *Diodorus Siculus*, l. 5. of ſome *Slingers*, who threw Stones with ſuch a Violence, that nothing could reſiſt their Impreſſion; and that, when they made uſe of Lead inſtead of Stone, the very Lead would melt in the Air, as it flew, by Reaſon of the Rapidity of the Motion which they gave it. *Patrick* and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

* *Plutarch*, (in his Book περὶ Πολυφιλίας) makes mention of ſeveral great Men, ſuch as *Theſeus* and *Peritheus*; *Achilles* and *Patroclus*; *Oreſtes* and *Pylades*; *Pythias* and *Damon*; &c. who were join'd together *in the Yoke of Friendſhip*,

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with him, which laſted as long as they two liv'd together; but in their Return home from this Expedition, one Thing happen'd, which occaſion'd *Saul*'s Jealouſy. Among the Crowds, that came out to meet them, and to grace their Triumph, there was a *Chorus* of Women, who ſung to the muſical Inſtruments, upon which they play'd a certain Song, whoſe chief Burthen was, *Saul has ſlain his Thouſands, and* † *David his ten Thouſands*; which ſo enrag'd *Saul* againſt *David*, that from that Time he never look'd on him with a gracious Eye. For, tho' he thought proper to retain him in his Service, and, for the preſent, conferr'd on him ſome Command in the Army; yet the Reward for his killing *Goliah*, which was to be the Marriage of his *eldeſt* Daughter, † he depriv'd him of by giving her to another.

When *Saul* return'd to his own Houſe, the ſame Spirit of Melancholy came upon him, as before; and, while *David* was touching his Harp before him as uſual, in order to alleviate his Malady, the outrageous King threw a Javelin at him with ſuch Fury, as would certainly have deſtroy'd him, had not Providence turn'd it aſide. Hereupon *David* thought proper to withdraw; yet *Saul* would ſtill continue him in his Service to have the more Opportunities againſt his Life. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

It happen'd too, that, by this Time, his ſecond Daughter (whoſe Name was *Michal)* had entertain'd kind Thoughts of *David*, which her Father was not unconſcious of; and therefore he ſignify'd to him, that, upon Condition he would kill him an hundred *Philiſtines*, (but not without ſome Hopes of himſelf falling in the Attempt) he ſhould have the Honour to become the King's *Son-in-Law*. *David* accepted the Condition, tho' he could not but perceive the latent Malice of it; and, taking ſome Choice Men along with him, invaded the *Philiſtines*, ſlew double the Number of them, and, for a Teſtimony thereof, † *ſent their Foreſkins* (according to Covenant) to the King; ſo that, all Things being thus gallantly accompliſh'd, and in ſo publick a Manner, the King could not refuſe him his Daughter, but, at the ſame Time, laid many other Schemes to take away his Life.

David makes his Eſcape, and while Saul *is among the Prophets, viſits his Friend* Jonathan.

Nay to ſuch deſperate Lengths did his Jealouſy run him, that he, caſting off all Diſguiſe, † commanded his Son *Jonathan*, and

as he calls it: But none of theſe were comparable to what we read of *Jonathan* and *David*, who enter'd into the moſt ſacred Bonds of mutual Aſſiſtance and Defence, to their very Death, and of Kindneſs to their Poſterity, even after either of them ſhould be dead. *Jonathan*, in particular, through the whole Story, ſhows towards *David* ſuch a Greatneſs of Soul, ſuch a Conſtancy of Mind, and Diſintereſtedneſs of Heart, as few *Romances* can produce Examples of. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

† *Viz.* in his killing *Goliah*; for all the Conqueſt gain'd afterwards was no more than the Conſequence of his Death.

† This was an high Affront to *David*, and one of the greateſt Injuries, that could be done him; however, for the preſent, he thought proper to diſſemble it. How *Jonathan* reſented this Uſage, we are no where told. It is likely, that his Duty to his Father made him prevail with *David* to take it patiently, as coming from a Man, who was ſometimes beſides himſelf, and knew not well what he did; and that *David* might be the more inclinable to do this, as having ſome Intimations given him of the good Eſteem, which the ſecond Daughter began to entertain of him. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The Reaſon, why *Saul* exacted the *Foreſkins of David* was to prevent all Cheat or Colluſion in the Matter, and that he might be ſure they were *Philiſtines* only, whom he kill'd. Had he demanded the Heads only of ſo many Men, *David*, (he might think) might perhaps cut off thoſe of his own Subjects, and bring them inſtead of the *Philiſtines*: But now, the *Philiſtines* being the only neighbouring People, who were uncircumcis'd, (for the *Arabians*, as deſcended from *Iſhmael*, and all the other Nations, which ſprung from *Eſau*, were circumcis'd, as well as the *Hebrews)* in producing their Foreſkins, there could be no Deception. Beſides that, this would be a groſs Inſult upon the *Philiſtines* in general, to whom *Saul* was deſirous to make *David* as odious as poſſible, that, at one Time or other, he might fall into their Hands. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† It is ſtrange, that *Saul* ſhould ſpeak to *Jonathan* to murther *David*, if he knew the Friendſhip he had for him; and he could not well be ignorant of it, ſince (in 1 *Sam.* xviii. 3, 4.) he had made ſo publick a Declaration of it. But he imagin'd perhaps, that his Love to a Father would overcome his Love to a Friend; and (taking an Eſtimate from himſelf) might think it no mean Incitement to his Son, that *David* was going to deprive not only the Father of the preſent Poſſeſſion, but the *Son* likewiſe the Right of Succeſſion to the Throne of *Iſrael*. But whatever *Saul*'s Reaſons might

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and ſome of the principal Men of his Court, at any Rate to diſpatch *David*; which *Jonathan* all along took care to acquaint him with, and, at the ſame Time, advis'd him to provide himſelf with ſome Place of ſafe Retreat, until he ſhould have an Opportunity of * expoſtulating the Matter with his Father, which accordingly he did, and with ſo good Succeſs, that his Father was (ſeemingly at leaſt) reconcil'd to *David*, and *Jonathan* next Day introduc'd him into his Preſence: But the Increaſe of *David*'s Fame, upon ſeveral Defeats given the *Philiſtines*, ſtill renewing, and increaſing *Saul*'s Jealouſy, would not ſuffer this Reconciliation to laſt long. *Saul* was taken with another Fit of Frenzy, and *David* was deſir'd to play to him: But, while he was employ'd in tuning his Harp, the other took an Opportunity (as he had done before) of darting a Javelin at him, which *David*, having a watchful Eye upon him, nimbly declin'd, and ſo retir'd to his own Houſe. Thither the King ſent his Guards, as ſoon as it was Light, to apprehend him; but by the Contrivance of his Wife *Michal* (who let him down from a Window) he made his Eſcape, and, by the Benefit of a dark Night, came to his old Friend *Samuel* at *Ramah*; to whom he told all his Complaints, and with whom (for the better Security of his Perſon) he went to *Najoh*, which was * a *School* or *College* of the Prophets, and there dwelt. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

IT was not long before *Saul* had Intelligence of his Abode, and † ſent a Party of Soldiers to apprehend him; but they, upon their Arrival at the Place, where they found *Samuel* teaching and inſtructing the younger Prophets, were ſeiz'd with a *prophetick Spirit*, and return'd not again. After theſe, he ſent freſh Meſſengers, and after them, others again; but no ſooner were they come within the *Verge* of the Place, but they all began to be affected in like Manner. *Saul* at length, impatient of theſe Delays, went himſelf; but as he drew

might be for deſiring *Jonathan*'s Aſſiſtance in ſo vile a Fact, 'tis plain, that there was a peculiar Providence of God in his diſcloſing himſelf ſo freely on this Head, ſince thereby *David* came to a right Information of his Danger. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* The Speech, which *Joſephus* puts in *Jonathan*'s Mouth upon this Occaſion, is expreſs'd in theſe Terms: —— "You have conceiv'd, Sir, a terrible Diſpleaſure againſt this young Man, and given Orders for his Death; but upon what "Provocation, or for what Fault, great or little, I cannot apprehend. He is a Perſon, to whom we ſtand indebted for "our Safety, and the Deſtruction of the *Philiſtines*; for vindicating the Honour of our Nation from the Scandal of a "forty Days Affront, in the Challenge of a Giant, whom not a Creature, but this innocent Youth, had a Heart to en-"counter; a Perſon, who purchas'd my Siſter for his Wife at your own Price; and, in fine, a Perſon entitled to your "Eſteem and Tenderneſs, both a brave Man, and a Member of your own Family. Be pleas'd to conſider then, what "Injury you do your own Daughter in making her feel the Mortification of being a *Widow* before ſhe enjoys the Bleſſing "of being a *Mother*. Be pleas'd to remember, who it was, that cur'd you of your dark melancholick Fits, and, by that "Means, laid an Obligation upon the whole Family; and, who it was, that (next under God) deliver'd us from our "implacable Enemies. Theſe, Sir, are Benefits never to be forgotten, without the Infamy of the blackeſt Ingratitude." *Jewiſh* Antiq. l. vi. c. 13.

* When theſe Schools of the Prophets were at firſt inſtituted is no where indicated in Scripture: But, as the firſt Mention we find of them is in *Samuel*'s Time, we can hardly ſuppoſe, that they were much ſuperior to it. It may be preſum'd therefore, that the ſad Degeneracy of the Prieſthood at firſt occaſion'd the Inſtitution of theſe Places, for the better Education of thoſe, that were to ſucceed in the ſacred Miniſtry, whether as *Prophets*, or *Prieſts*. According to the Places, that are ſpecify'd in Scripture, (1 *Sam.* x. 5. 10. and xix. 20. 2 *Kings* ii. 5. iv. 38. and xxii. 14.) they were firſt erected in the Cities of the *Levites*, which, for the more convenient Inſtruction of the People, were diſpers'd up and down in the ſeveral Tribes of *Iſrael*. In theſe Places the *Prophets* had convenient *Colleges* built (whereof *Najoh* ſeems to be one) for their Abode; and, living in Communities, had ſome one of diſtinguiſh'd Note (very probably by *divine Election*) ſet over them to be their Head or *Preſident*. Here it was, that they ſtudy'd the Law, and learn'd to expound the ſeveral Precepts of it. Here it was, that, by previous Exerciſe, they qualify'd themſelves for the Reception of the Spirit of *Prophecy*, whenever it ſhould pleaſe God to ſend it upon them. Here it was, that they were inſtructed in the ſacred Art of *Pſalmody*, or (as the Scripture calls it, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 1, 7.) in *propheſying with Harps, with Pſalteries, and Cymbals*: And hence it was, that, when any Bleſſings were to be promis'd, Judgments denounc'd, or extraordinary Events predicted, the Meſſengers were generally choſen: So that theſe *Colleges* were *Seminaries* of divine Knowledge, and Nurſeries of that Race of Prophets, which ſucceeded from *Samuel* to the Time of *Malachi*. *Stillingfleet*'s Orig. Sacræ. *Wheatly*, on the Schools of the Prophets, and *Jacob Alting*. de Repub. Heb.

† Such was *Saul*'s implacable Hatred to *David*, that it had aboliſh'd, not only all Reſpect and Reverence of *Samuel*, (under whoſe Protection *David* then was) but all Regard likewiſe to the College of the Prophets, which in thoſe Days had obtain'd the Privilege of a Sanctuary. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Grotius*, de Jure Belli & Pacis, l. 3. c. 11.

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drew near to *Najoh*, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, ſo that he went along † *propheſying*, until he came to the Place, where *Samuel* and *David* were, and there, ‡ ſtripping himſelf of his upper Garments, he lay (as it were in an Extacy) almoſt naked on the Ground, all that Day and the next Night.

DAVID took this Opportunity to make a private Viſit to his Friend *Jonathan*, with whom he expoſtulated his Father's Unkindneſs, which the other could no ways excuſe, only he aſſur'd him of his beſt * Offices; that he would make what Diſcovery he could of his Father's Deſigns againſt him, and not fail to acquaint him with them. In the mean Time he renew'd the League of Friendſhip that was between them, and directed him where to conceal himſelf for a Day or two, until he could learn, whether it was proper for him to appear or no; which he was to ſignify to him by his ſhooting ſome Arrows, in ſuch a Manner, as they concluded on, and ſo mutually embracing they parted. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

† The *Feaſt* of the *New-Moon* was now come, which *Saul* return'd from *Najoh* to celebrate; but, as he obſerv'd that * *David*'s Seat at the Table had for two *Who, upon his Account, had ran the hazard of his Life.*

† This is a Word of an extenſive Signification, and may denote ſometimes ſuch Actions, Motions, and Diſtortions, as Prophets, in their Inſpirations, are wont to expreſs:

Increta qualis Entheos curſus tulit,
Cum jam recepto Mænas inſanit Deo. Sen. in Medeâ.

Which perhaps may be very juſtly apply'd to *Saul* upon this Occaſion. But the Generality of Interpreters, in this Place, take *propheſying* to ſignify *Saul*'s ſinging of Pſalms, or Hymns of Thankſgiving and Praiſe, which even againſt his Will he was compell'd to do, to teach him the Vanity of his Deſigns againſt *David*, and that in them he fought againſt God himſelf. *Calmet*'s Commentary on 1 *Sam.* xviii. 10. and *Pool*'s Annotations on xix. 23.

‡ The Words in our Tranſlation are, ——— *And he ſtript off his Cloaths alſo, and lay down naked, all that Day, and all that Night*, 1 *Sam.* xix. 24. In which Words, and ſome other Portions of the like Import, we are not to imagine, that the Perſons there ſpoken of were entirely *naked*, but only that they were diveſted of ſome *external* Habit or other, which, upon certain Occaſions, they might lay aſide. For, whereas it is ſaid of ſome Prophets, *Iſa.* xx. 2. and *Mic.* i 8. that they went about *naked*, we can hardly think that they could be guilty of ſo much Indecency, and eſpecially by the expreſs Order of God, who had always teſtify'd his Abhorrence of *Nudity*, and enjoin'd his Prieſts the Uſe of ſeveral Garments to cover the Body, that thus they might be diſtinguiſh'd from the *Pagan* Prieſts, who were not aſham'd to appear naked. The Words in the Original therefore, which we render *naked*, or *to be naked*, ſignify no more, than either to have Part of the Body uncover'd, or to be without a Gown, or upper Garment, which the *Romans* call'd *Toga*, and (according to the Cuſtom of the *Eaſtern* People) was wont to be put on when they went abroad or made any publick Appearance. And therefore it was ſome ſuch Veſtment as this, or perhaps his Military Accoutrements, which *Saul*, upon this Occaſion, put off; and that this was enough to denominate him *naked*, is manifeſt from what *Aurelius Victor*, ſpeaking of thoſe who were ſent to *Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus*, to bring him to the Senate to be made Dictator, ſays, That they found him *naked*, plowing on the other Side of the *Tyber*; whereas *Livy*, who relates the ſame Story, obſerves, that he call'd to his Wife *Rucca*, for his Gown, or *Toga*, that he might appear fit to keep them Company. Eſſay towards a new Tranſlation.

* The *Speech* which *Joſephus* puts in *Jonathan*'s Mouth, upon this Occaſion, is very tender and *pathetick*: ——— "That God, who fills and governs the Univerſe, and knows the Thoughts of my Heart in the very Conception of them; "that God, *ſays he*, be Witneſs to the Faith, that is vow'd and promis'd betwixt us; and that I will never give over "ſearching into, and ſifting the private Deliberations and Purpoſes of my Father, till I ſhall have diſcover'd the Bottom of "his Heart, and whether there be any ſecret Rancour in his Thoughts, or not, that may work to your Prejudice: And "if I ſhall be able to make any Thing out at laſt, whether it be for, or againſt you, it ſhall be the firſt Thing I do to give you "Information of it. The Searcher of Hearts will bear me Witneſs that this is true, and that I have ever made it my "earneſt Prayer to Almighty God, to bleſs and proſper you in your Perſon and Deſigns; and you may aſſure yourſelf, "that he will be as gracious to you for the future, as he has been hitherto, and lay all your Enemies at your Feet. In "the mean while, pray be ſure to keep theſe Things in Memory, and when I am gone, to take care of my poor Children." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. c. 14.

† The *Jewiſh* Months were *Lunar*, and never began before the Moon appear'd above the Horizon; for which Purpoſe, there were certain Perſons plac'd upon the Mountains, ſome Time before the new Moon was expected, to give Notice by the Sound of an Horn when it firſt appear'd, that ſo the News thereof might immediately be carry'd to *Jeruſalem*. But leſt there ſhould be any Miſtake in this Method of making their Obſervation, from this Example of *Saul*'s, it is ſuppos'd, that they celebrated this *Feſtival* for two Days together. Whether the *Heathens* had this Rite from the *Jews* or no, 'tis certain, that other Nations had Feaſts at the Beginning of every Month, and that, with the *Romans*, the *Calends* in particular were Feſtival Days, conſecrated to *Juno*, to whom Sacrifices at this Time were offer'd. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* That ſitting at Table was an antienter Cuſtom, than either lying or leaning at Meat, is obvious from this Paſſage. The *Egyptians*, when they eat at *Joſeph*'s Entertainment, ſat at Table, and ſo did the *Hebrews*. *Homer* always introduces

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two Days been empty, he enquir'd of *Jonathan*, † what was become of *the Son of* Jeſſe, as he call'd him in Contempt. *Jonathan* told him, that he had given him Leave to go to an *anniverſary* Feaſt of his Family at *Bethlehem*; whereupon *Saul*, ſuſpecting very probably the Reality of his Anſwer, fell into a Paſſion with his Son, and upbraided him with his Friendſhip for *David*, which (as he told him) would prove fatal to himſelf, and injurious to his Succeſſion; and therefore he commanded him to produce him; for reſolv'd he was, that this *Rival* of theirs ſhould die. *Jonathan* was going to interpoſe ſomething in Vindication of his Friend, and the Unreaſonableneſs of his Father's Indignation againſt him; which provok'd his Father to ſuch a Degree, that, forgetting all Ties of *paternal* Love, † he threw a Javelin at him with an Intent to kill him. But he avoided the Blow, and retir'd; and, the next Morning, went into the Fields, under Pretence of ſhooting with his Bow and Arrows, to give *David* the Signal. To him he communicated all that had paſs'd between his Father and him; that his Father was implacable, and determin'd to deſtroy him, and therefore he adviſ'd him to eſcape for his Life: And ſo, having made new Proteſtations to each other of perpetual Friendſhip, they embrac'd, and parted.

From 1 Sam. i to the End.

EVER after this *David* was baniſh'd from Court, and liv'd in the Nature of an *Out-Law*. The firſt Place that he betook himſelf to was † *Nob*, where ſtood the Tabernacle at that Time, and where ‖ *Abimelech*

David's *flying from Place to Place for Shelter againſt* Saul.

duces his Heroes in this Poſture; and that this was the known Cuſtom among the antient People of *Italy*, *Virgil*, in theſe Words, teſtifies:

Perpetuis ſoliti Patres conſidere Menſis. *Æne.* vii.

It is not to be diſſembled however, that very early, and even in the Times of *Saul*, the Uſe of Table-Beds, or Beds to lie, or lean upon at Meals, had obtain'd among the *Jews*; for when the Witch of *Endor*, with much Entreaty, prevail'd with *Saul* to take a little Refreſhment, 'tis ſaid, that *he aroſe from the Earth, and ſat upon the Bed*, 1 Sam. xxviii. 23. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† It may ſeem a little ſtrange, that *Saul*, who had ſo often endeavour'd to kill *David*, and was now juſt return'd from an Expedition undertaken againſt his Life, ſhould ever expect to ſee him at his Table any more. But he might think perhaps, that *David* was inclinable to overlook all that had paſs'd, as the Effect of his Frenzy and Melancholy; that now he had been propheſying at *Najoh*, he was return'd to a ſound Mind, and become a new Man; and that, becauſe, after the firſt Javelin darted at him, *David* had ventur'd into his Preſence again, he might, for the future, be guilty of the like Indiſcretion. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† If it be aſk'd, how it came to paſs, that *Saul* always had a Javelin or Spear in Readineſs, (as on this, and other Occaſions) to execute his evil Purpoſes? The Anſwer is, that Spears were the Sceptres of thoſe Ages, which Kings always carry'd in their Hands. That they always carry'd the Sceptres in their Hands appears from *Homer*, and that theſe Sceptres were Spears is evident from *Juſtin*, (lib. xxiii. c. 3) where, ſpeaking of the firſt Age of the *Romans*, (which Dr *Patrick* thinks was about the Age of *Saul*) he tells us, that, as yet, in theſe Times, Kings had Spears, as Enſigns of Royalty, which the *Greeks* call'd Sceptres. The *Life of* David, *by the Author of the Revelation examin'd.*

† There is mention made of two Cities of this Name, one on the *Eaſt*, or *further* Side, and the other on the *Weſt*, or *hither* Side of *Jordan*. The Generality of Interpreters will have the City here ſpecify'd, to be that which ſtood on the *Weſt* Side, and in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. Tho' it is not reckon'd among the Number of the Cities, that were at firſt aſſign'd to the Prieſts, yet, that it afterwards became one of the *ſacerdotal* Towns, and eſpecially (as we may imagine) when the Tabernacle came to be mov'd thither, is evident from 1 *Sam.* xxii. 19. and *Nehem.* xi. 32. and ſome ſuppoſe it ſtood about four Leagues from *Gibeah*. *Calmet*'s Commentary, and *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

‖ The Words of our Bleſſed Saviour, in *Mark* ii. 25, are theſe, ——— *Have ye never read what* David *did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him, how he went into the Houſe of God, in the Days of* Abiathar, *the High-Prieſt, and did eat the Shew-Bread, and gave alſo to them that were with him?* Now there are two Things, which the Author of this Book of *Samuel* aſſerts, quite contrary to what our Saviour declares, *viz.* 1ſt, That *David was alone, and no Man with him*, Chap. xxi. 1. And 2dly, That *Abimelech* was at that Time High Prieſt; whereas our Saviour affirms, both that *David* had Company along with him, and that *Abiathar* was then in the Pontificate. Now, 1ſt, That *David* had Company with him, and that *Abimelech* knew it, is evident from his Words in the fourth Verſe; *There is no common Bread in my Hand, but there is hallowed Bread*, if the young Men *have kept themſelves at leaſt from Women*; and therefore *Abimelech*'s Meaning muſt be, that *David* had no Guards to attend him, as it was uſual for Perſons of his Quality to have; or, at leaſt, thoſe that were with him might be order'd to keep at a Diſtance, and ſo *Abimelech* (when he utter'd theſe Words) might not ſee them, tho', when he came into a cloſer Conference with *David*, *David* might inform him, what Retinue he had brought, and conſequently, that all the Shew-Bread was no

more

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Abimelech was High-Prieſt; but, as he had no Attendants, he pretended to *Abimelech*, that he was ſent by the King upon † a Buſineſs of ſuch Diſpatch, that he had Time neither to take Arms, nor Proviſion with him, and therefore had obtain'd of the High-Prieſt * *Goliah*'s Sword, which had been depoſited in the Tabernacle, and ſome of the *Shew-bread*, which, the Day before, had been taken off from the *Golden Table*, and with theſe he proceeded to *Gath*, as not thinking himſelf ſafe in any Part of *Saul*'s Dominions.

He had not been long in *Gath* however, before he was diſcover'd, and the King inform'd of his being that great Man of War in *Iſrael*, who had ſo often defeated, and deſtroy'd the *Philiſtines*; ſo that, to get clear of this Information, he was forc'd to counterfeit *Madneſs*, and an *Epilepſy*, which he did ſo artfully, that, by this Means, he evaded the Suſpicion of the King, and made his Eſcape to † *Adullam*, a Town in the Tribe of *Judah*, where his Brethren and Relations, together with many Malecontents, and Men of deſperate Fortunes met him, and made up a little Army of about four hundred in Number. From 1 Sam. 1. to the End.

After his Family had thus join'd him, he could not but be apprehenſive, that the Wrath of *Saul* would fall upon his aged Parents, and therefore his next Care was to provide them with a ſafe Retreat; which he did by putting both himſelf and them under the Protection of the King of *Moab*, who was then at Enmity with *Saul*. And with his Parents he thus continu'd, until the Prophet *Gad* (who attended him) adviſ'd him to leave *Moab*, and to return into the Land of *Judah*; which accordingly he did, and took up his Station in the † Foreſt of *Hareth*, where *Abiathar* the Prieſt came to him, and, *upon this ſad Occaſion*, brought along with him all the *pontifical* Ornaments.

During

more than what they wanted for their preſent Support. 2dly, Tho' it be granted that the Name of *High-Prieſt*, in its ſtricteſt Senſe, did not at this Time belong to *Abiathar*, yet ſince it is generally agreed, that he was the *Sagan*, (as the *Jews* of latter Days call him, who is the High-Prieſt's *Vicar*) he might well enough (in a qualify'd Senſe) be called the *High Prieſt*; eſpecially conſidering his immediate Succeſſion to his Father, and how ſhort his Father's Continuance in the Office was, after this Interview with *David*. Nor can we ſee any great Impropriety in ſaying, that ſuch a Thing was done in *the Days of* Abiathar *the High-Prieſt*, tho' done ſomewhat before he was inveſted with that Dignity; any more than in ſaying, that ſuch a Thing happen'd in the Days of *Henry* VIII. which ſtrictly came to paſs ſome Days before he began to reign. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† It muſt be own'd, that *David*, in this Pretence, did not ſpeak direct Truth, nor are we from hence to take an Example for ſpeaking Lyes; but one Thing may be ſaid in his Excuſe, that, as he ſaw a *Doeg* there, who he knew would inform *Saul* of what paſs'd between him and *Abimelech*, his Pretence of Buſineſs was on Purpoſe to furniſh the High-Prieſt (if he were called to an Account) with a better Apology for his Reception of *David*, ſince he knew no other, but that he came Expreſs from the King: And accordingly we may obſerve, that *Abimelech* inſiſts on that chiefly. 'Tis a melancholy Conſideration, however, that the Wickedneſs of the World ſhould be ſuch, as to put even excellent Men ſometimes upon the Neceſſity of Lying to preſerve their Lives, which cannot be ſafe without it. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* It was an antient Cuſtom, not only among the *Jews*, but the *Heathens* likewiſe, to hang up the Arms that were taken from their Enemies in their Temples; and in Conformity hereunto, the Sword wherewith he cut off *Goliah*'s Head *David* dedicated to the Lord, and deliver'd to the Prieſt, to be kept as a Monument of his Victory, and of the *Iſraelites* Deliverance. And, as it was cuſtomary to hang up Arms in the Temples, ſo, when the Occaſions of the State requir'd it, it was no unuſual Thing to take them down, and employ them in the publick Service; from whence came that Saying of *Seneca*, *pro Republicâ plerumque Templa nudant*. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† It was a Town in the Tribe of *Judah*, of ſome conſiderable Note in the Days of *Euſebius*, and about ten Miles from *Eleutheropolis* Eaſtward, where there was a Rock of the ſame Name, in which was a Cave, naturally ſtrong and well fortify'd, to which *David* retreated; as indeed moſt of the Mountains of *Paleſtine* were full of *Caverns*, whither the Country People generally betook themſelves for Safety in Time of War. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. II.

† Both St *Jerom* and *Euſebius* make mention of a Place of this Name in the Tribe of *Judah*, lying *Weſtward* of *Jeruſalem*; of which *Rabbi Solomon* (upon the Credit of ſome antient Tradition) ſays, that, being before dry, barren, and impaſſable, upon *David*'s coming, it became fruitful and irriguous, and that in the xxiiid *Pſalm* (where he conſiders God as his *Shepherd*, who would lead him into *fruitful Paſtures*, and under his Protection, keep him ſafe in the moſt *dangerous Scenes*) he alludes to this, *He ſhall feed me in a green Paſture, and lead me fourth by the Waters of Comfort*: For ſurely it is not impoſſible, but that *this*, which was before a barren Deſert, might now, by a ſingular Bleſſing from God upon the Induſtry of *David* and his Companions, become a green and well-water'd Paſture. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III. and *The Hiſtory of* David, *by the Author of Revelation examin'd*.

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Who ſlew Ahimelech *the High-Prieſt, and diverſe others, upon his Account.*

DURING *David*'s ſhort Stay at *Nob*, *Doeg*, the King's principal Herdſman, was there, and, upon his Return to Court, gave *Saul* Information of all that had paſs'd between the High-Prieſt *Ahimelech* and *David*. Hereupon *Saul* ſent for *Ahimelech*, and the reſt of the Prieſts, and, having accus'd them of a Conſpiracy, and traiterous Practices againſt him, (* notwithſtanding all the High-Prieſt could ſay, in Vindication of himſelf, and his Brethren) he commanded them to be put to Death. His Guards, who ſtood by, and heard *Ahimelech*'s Defence, * would not undertake ſo barbarous an Office; but *Doeg*, who had been their *Accuſer*, at the King's Command, became their *Executioner*, and, with his ſacrilegious Hand, ſlew no leſs, than || *eighty-five* of them. Nor did *Saul*'s bloody Reſentment ſtop here: * For, ſending a Party to *Nob*, he commanded them to kill Man, Woman, and Child, and even every living Creature; ſo that, of all the Children of *Ahimelech*, none eſcap'd, but *Abiathar*, (as we ſaid before) who came to *David*, and told him the diſmal Tidings of this Maſſacre, which *David* could not but ſadly condole, and, in ſome Meaſure, look upon himſelf as the innocent Occaſion of it. However he gave *Abiathar* Aſſurances of his Protection, that he ſhould ſhare the ſame Fate with him; and that, with his own Life, he would ſhield him from all Danger.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

WHILE *Saul* was imbruing his Hands in the innocent Blood of his Subjects, *David* was employing his Arms in the neceſſary Defence of his Country; for, hearing that the *Philiſtines* had made an Incurſion upon *Keilah*, a City of *Judah*, † he went, and reliev'd the Place, repuls'd the Enemy with a great Loſs of Men, and took

And purſues David *into ſeveral Places, but is ſtill diſappointed.*

* The Speech, which *Joſephus* draws up for the High-Prieſt, upon this Occaſion, is directed to *Saul*, and conceiv'd in theſe Words: "I did not receive *David* as your *Majeſty*'s Enemy, but as the faithfulleſt of your Friends and "Officers, and (what is more) in the Quality of your Son too, and a Relation in ſo tender a Degree of Affinity and "Alliance. For how ſhould any Body imagine *that* Man to be your Enemy, upon whom you have conferr'd ſo "many Honours? Or why ſhould not I rather preſume ſuch a Perſon, without any further Enquiry, to be your "ſingular Friend?——He told me, that he was ſent in haſte by yourſelf, upon earneſt Buſineſs; and if I had "not ſupply'd him with what he wanted, it would have reflected an Indignity upon yourſelf, rather than upon him. "Wherefore, I hope, that the Blame will not fall upon me, even tho' *David* ſhould be found as culpable, as you "ſuſpect him; unleſs an Act of pure Compaſſion and Humanity, abſtracted from the leaſt Thought, Knowledge, or "Imagination of any evil Intention, ſhall be underſtood to make me privy to a *Conſpiracy*: For the Service I did him, "was Matter of Reſpect to the King's *Son-in-law*, and the King's military Officer, not to the Perſon or Intereſt of "*David*." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. cap. 14.

* In this they were to be commended: But much more Praiſe they would have deſerv'd, if they had offer'd up their Petitions for theſe innocent People; if they had remonſtrated to the King, that he was going to commit a Thing, that was contrary to all Laws, both *divine* and *human*; and if (when they ſaw, that neither their Reaſons nor Petitions availed) they had look'd upon this Order, as the Effect of one of the King's diſtracted Fits, and accordingly ſeiz'd and ſecur'd him, until the Prieſts had made their Eſcape, and he return'd to a better Mind. For to ſtand wringing their Hands, while they ſaw ſo many innocent Creatures murther'd, and foreign Soldiers made the Inſtruments of the King's Cruelty, was much the ſame Thing, as to betray all divine and human Rights merely to pleaſe a *Tyrant*. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary. Vide *Joſephus*'s *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. cap. 14. who has, upon this Occaſion, a curious Deſcant about the Abuſe of Power in Kings, when once from a low they come to be exalted to an high Station in Life.

|| The *Septuagint*, as well as the *Syrian* Verſion, makes the Number of Prieſts, ſlain by *Doeg*, to be *three hundred and five*, and *Joſephus* three hundred and eighty-five, which is a large Variation from the *Hebrew* Text. *Millar*'s Hiſtory of the Church.

* This Party, as *Joſephus* informs us, was commanded by *Doeg*, the vile Informer and Murtherer, who *taking ſome Men, as wicked as himſelf, to his Aſſiſtance*, ſlew in all *three hundred and eighty five Perſons*, and, in Addition to theſe, tis thought by ſome, that the *Gibeonites*, (upon whoſe Account there was ſo ſore a Famine in the Days of *David*) who might now be at *Nob*, in Attendance upon the Prieſts, were at this Time ſlain. Tis certain, *Saul* was now become a mere Tyrant, and againſt thoſe poor People acted more cruelly, than he did againſt the *Amalekites*, ſome of whom he ſpar'd, even contrary to God's Command; but in this Caſe he let none eſcape, on purpoſe to deter others from giving the leaſt Shelter or Aſſiſtance to *David*, and to incite them the rather to come, and give him Information, wherever his Haunts or Lurking-Places were. *Joſephus*'s Antiq. lib. vi. c. 14.

† We read of no Embaſſy, that the People of *Keilah* ſent to *David* to deſire his Aſſiſtance, nor of any particular Affection they had for him; and therefore we may ſuppoſe, that *David* undertook this Expedition, out of pure Love to his *Countrymen*, to let the World ſee, how ſerviceable he could be to them, in Caſe he was reſtored to his Dignity again, and that (what ill Treatment ſoever he ſhould meet with from the Hand of *Saul*) nothing ſhould provoke him to abandon his Love for his Country. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

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took from them a conſiderable Booty of Cattle. *Saul* had ſoon Intelligence of this Action; and ſuppoſing that *David* would now fortify himſelf in this ſtrong Hold, he ſent an Army to inveſt it: But *David*, having conſulted the Divine Oracle upon this Emergency, found that the Inhabitants of the Place would prove perfidious to him, and therefore he left them, and retir'd into a Wood in the † Deſerts of *Ziph*, whither *Saul*, for Want of Intelligence, could not purſue him; but his Son *Jonathan*, having private Notice ſent him, went to him, and gave him all the Comfort and Encouragement that he could; aſſuring him, that his Father's Malice would never reach him; that he ſtill hop'd to ſee him King of *Iſrael*, and himſelf his *ſecond*; and with theſe Words, confirming the Covenant of Friendſhip between them, they embrac'd and parted.

The People of the Wilderneſs were very officious in ſending *Saul* Intelligence where *David* was, and (if he would ſupply them with a ſufficient Force) undertook to betray him into his Hands: But *David*, having taken Notice of their intended Treachery, retir'd farther into the Deſert of *Maon*, whither *Saul* purſu'd him, and preſs'd him ſo cloſe, that there was but a Valley between the two Armies. *David*'s Army was ſo very ſmall, that *Saul* was thinking of encompaſſing the Mountain, where he encamp'd, in order to prevent his Eſcape; when News was brought him, that the *Philiſtines* had invaded the Country on the other Side, ſo that he was forc'd to drop his private Reſentment for the public Weal, and divert his Arms another Way: But, as ſoon as the *Philiſtines* were repuls'd, he, with three Thouſand choice Men, renewed his Purſuit of *David*, who by this Time was retir'd into the ſtrong Holds of † *Engedi*. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

As *Saul* was on his March, he happen'd to turn into a Cave to eaſe Nature, where *David* and ſome of his Men lay hid. His Men, when they ſaw the King entering alone, thought it a lucky Opportunity, that Providence had put in their Hands, and accordingly inſtigated *David* to diſpatch him: But *David* rejected the Offer with Abhorrence, * *God forbid that I ſhould ſtretch forth my Hand againſt the Lord's Anointed*; and only (to ſhew *Saul* how much he was in his Power) went ſoftly, and † cut off the Skirt of his Robe. When *Saul* was gone out of the Cave, *David* call'd to him at a Diſtance, and,

† In *Joſhua* xv. 55. we read of a Town of this Name, where Mention is likewiſe made of *Carmel* and *Maon*, and therefore it probably was adjacent to them. And here, in the Story of *David*, we find *Carmel* and *Maon* mention'd as adjoining to *Ziph*; ſo that it is not to be doubted but that by the *Ziph* in the Wilderneſs, where *David* now conceal'd himſelf, we are to underſtand the *Ziph*, which was in the Neighbourhood of *Carmel*, and *Maon*, in the ſouthern Part of the Tribe of *Judah*, and (according to St *Jerom*) about eight Miles eaſtward from *Hebron*. *Wells*'s Geogr. of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

† *En-gedi* (now called *Anguedi*) in the Days of St *Jerom*, was a large Village, ſituate in the Deſerts, which lay upon the weſtern Coaſts of the *Salt* or *Dead Sea*, not very far from the Plains of *Jericho*: And, as the Country thereabouts abounded with Mountains, and theſe Mountains had Plenty of vaſt Caves in them, it was a very commodious Place for *David* to retire to, and conceal himſelf in. *Euſebius* makes it famous for excellent *Balm*; and *Solomon* in his Song, for Vineyards, which, in all Probability, were planted by his Father, during his Retirement in this Place, and therefore ſo peculiarly celebrated by the Son. *Calmet*'s Commentary, *Wells*'s Geogr. of the Old Teſtam. Vol. III. and *The Hiſtory of King* David, by the Author of *Revelation Examin'd*.

* This one Example of *David*'s, under all the Provocations he receiv'd from *Saul*, abundantly ſhews us, that the Perſons of Kings are ſacred and inviolable:

Regum timendorum in proprios Greges,
Reges in ipſos Imperium eſt Jovis. Hor. Od.

† If it be aſk'd, how *David* could do this without *Saul*'s perceiving it? The Anſwer may be, that this poſſibly might be ſome upper looſe Garment, which *Saul* might put off, and lay aſide at ſome Diſtance from him, upon this Occaſion; and that, as there were ſeveral Rooms, or particular Cells, in theſe large Caverns, which might have ſecret Paſſages from one another, *Saul*, at the Mouth of one of theſe Cells, might lay down this upper Garment, which *David* perceiving, and knowing all the Paſſages of the Place, might go ſome ſecret Way, and cut off ſome ſmall Part of it. Nor could the Noiſe, which *David*'s Motion might make, be well heard by *Saul*, becauſe it muſt have been drown'd by a much greater Noiſe, which *Saul*'s Army, waiting for him at the Mouth of the Cave, may be ſuppos'd to make. *Pool*'s Annotations.

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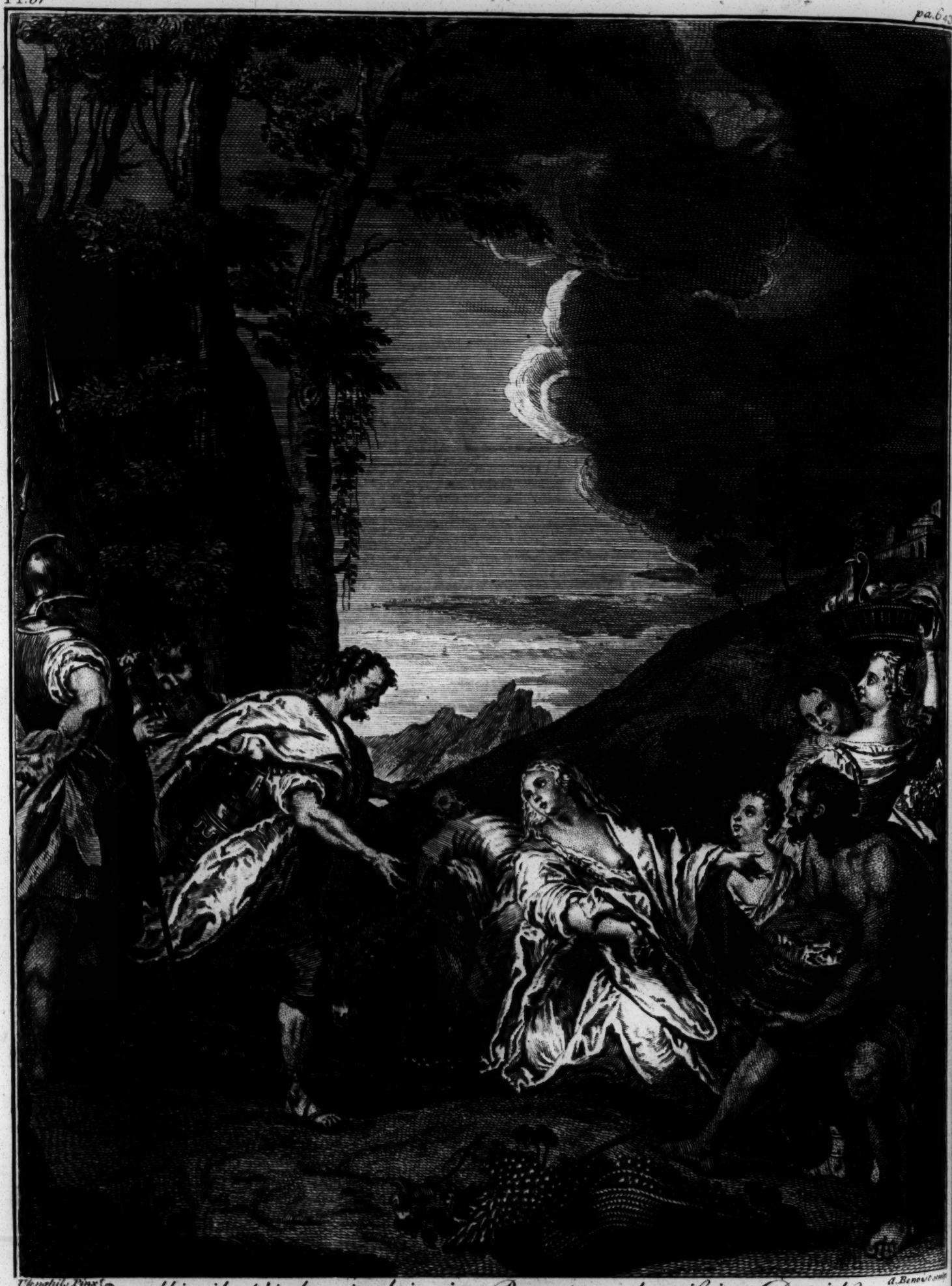

V. Unghals Pinx.t — A. Benoist sculp.

• Abigails Wisdom in bringing Presents and pacifying David —
• And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the Ass, and fell before David on her face, & bowed her self to the ground. I Sam^{l}. Chap^{r}. XXV. Ver. 23.

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and, ſhewing him the Skirt of his Raiment, declar'd his Innocence in ſuch tender Terms, and with ſuch ſubmiſſive Behaviour, that he made the King's Heart relent. So that, with the utmoſt Compunction, he acknowledg'd his Guilt in thus perſecuting the Juſt; and, from the many Eſcapes, which God had vouchſaf'd *David*, concluding aſſuredly that he was to ſucceed in the Kingdom, he conjur'd him, by all that was ſacred, ‖ not to deſtroy his Family; and, having obtain'd this Promiſe, he return'd Home: But *David*, * not daring to truſt to his fair Words, ſtill kept himſelf cloſe in the Faſtneſſes of the Hills.

MUCH about this Time † the Prophet *Samuel* dy'd, and was bury'd at *Ramah*, the Place of his Habitation, in great Solemnity, and † with the general Lamentation of the People: During which Time, *David* took the Opportunity to remove from *En-gedi*, and to retire farther into the Wilderneſs of *Paran*, not far from *Maon*, where he had been once before. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

IN the Neighbourhood of this Place, there liv'd a wealthy Man, whoſe Name was *Nabal*, but himſelf was of a ſurly and moroſe Diſpoſition. While *David* abode in this Wilderneſs the Time before, he had taken great Care to reſtrain his Men from doing any Injury to *Nabal*'s Flocks, and now, in the Time of his *Sheep-ſheering*, (which, in theſe Countries, was always a Seaſon of great Feſtivity and Entertainment) he ſent Meſſengers to him, that, in Conſideration of the many *Civilities*, he had ſhewn him, he would be pleas'd to ſend ſome Proviſions for the Support of his Army. But *Nabal* receiv'd the Meſſengers *David's Interview with* Abigail, Nabal's *Wife, whom he afterwards marries.*

‖ But how did *David* abſolve his Promiſe, or keep his Oath with *Saul*, when, in 2 *Sam.* xxi. 8, he ſlew ſo many of his Sons? The Reply, that is uſually made to this, is,———That this Promiſe, or Oath of *David*'s, could never be *abſolute* or *unconditional*, becauſe, upon Suppoſition that any of *Saul*'s Family had become *rebellious*, they had nevertheleſs been obnoxious to the Sword of Juſtice; that, tho' *David* could bind himſelf with his Oath, yet he could not bind God, to whoſe Will and Pleaſure all private Obligations muſt be ſubmitted; and (what is more) that this Execution was not done by *David*'s Order, but at the Deſire of the *Gibeonites*, to whom God had promis'd that Satisfaction ſhould be made for *Saul*'s bloody Endeavours to deſtroy them. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

* 'Tis an old Saying, and a wiſe one, μέμνησο ἀπιστεῖν, *Remember not to be too credulous*; and the Advice of the Son of *Sirach* is this,———*Never truſt thine Enemy; tho' he humble himſelf, yet take good Heed, and beware of him.* Eccluſ. xii. 10, 11.

† The *Jews* are of Opinion that *Samuel* died only four Months before *Saul:* But, by the Generality of Chriſtian *Chronologers*, he is ſuppos'd to have died about two Years before the Death of that Prince, and in the ninety-eighth Year of his Age; twenty of which had been ſpent in the Government of *Iſrael* (tho' Sir *John Marſham* will have it no more than ſixteen) before *Saul*'s Inauguration, after which, he liv'd about eighteen. He was at firſt interr'd at *Ramah*, but, in the Time of the Emperor *Arcadius*, his Body was tranſported from *Paleſtine* to *Conſtantinople*; and (as St *Jerom* informs us) receiv'd both by the Clergy and Laity with a Joy unſpeakable, and Honours almoſt infinite. He was indeed, while he liv'd, an excellent Governor, and, through his whole Adminiſtration, above Vanity, Corruption, or any private Views. Thoſe, that attend to his Life, may obſerve, that he was modeſt without Meanneſs, mild without Weakneſs, firm without Obſtinacy, and ſevere without Harſhneſs; or, as the Author of *Eccleſiaſticus* has recorded his Actions, and conſecrated this *Eulogy* to his Memory:———Samuel, *the Prophet of the Lord*, ſays he, *beloved of the Lord, eſtabliſh'd a Kingdom, and anointed Princes over his People. By the Law of the Lord he judged the Congregation, and the Lord had Reſpect unto* Jacob. *By his Faithfulneſs he was found a true Prophet, and by his Word he was known to be faithful in Viſion. He called upon the mighty God, when his Enemies preſſed upon him on every Side, when he offered the ſucking Lamb; and the Lord thundered from Heaven, and with a great Noiſe made his Voice to be heard. He deſtroyed the Rulers of the* Syrians, *and all the Princes of the* Philiſtines. *Before his long Sleep, he made Proteſtations in the Sight of the Lord, and his Anointed, and after his Death he propheſied, and ſhew'd the King his End.* Eccluſ. xlvi. 13, &c. But, beſides the Things that are recorded of this Prophet in the firſt Book of *Samuel*, there are ſome other Paſſages concerning him in the firſt Book of *Chronicles*; as, That he enriched the Tabernacle with ſeveral Spoils, which he took from the Enemies of *Iſrael* during his Adminiſtration, Chap. xxvi. 28. That he aſſiſted in regulating the Diſtribution of the *Levites*, which *David* afterwards preſcribed for the Service of the Temple, Chap. ix. 22. And laſtly, that he wrote the Hiſtory of *David*, in Conjunction with the Prophets *Nathan* and *Gad:* But, as he was dead before *David* came to the Throne, this can be meant only of the Beginning of that Hiſtory, which by the other two Prophets might be continu'd and concluded. There is great Probability indeed, that he compos'd the twenty-four firſt Chapters of the firſt Book of *Samuel*, which contains the Beginning of *David*'s Life, and ſeveral hiſtorical Facts, wherein he himſelf had a large Share; but as for the latter Part of it, it was impoſſible for him to write it, becauſe, in the Beginning of the xxvth Chapter, there is Mention made of his Death.

† When they ſaw the Diſorders of *Saul*'s Reign, they had great Reaſon to lament their Loſs of *Samuel*, and their Sin, in rejecting ſo great a Prophet, and ſo good a Magiſtrate. *Millar*'s Hiſtory of the Church.

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gers very rudely, and, with ſome opprobrious Reflections upon *David* himſelf, ſent them away empty, which ſo exaſperated *David*, that, in the Heat of his Reſentment, he vow'd to deſtroy all *Nabal*'s Family before next Morning, and with this Reſolution he ſet forward: But *Abigail*, *Nabal*'s Wife, who was a very beautiful Woman, and in Temper the very *reverſe* to her Huſband, being inform'd by her Servant of what had paſs'd, took this Expedient to divert his Ire.

She order'd her Servants immediately to pack up two hundred Loaves of Bread, ‖ two Bottles of Wine, five Sheep ready dreſs'd, five Meaſures of parch'd Corn, an hundred Cluſters of Raiſins, and two hundred Cakes of Figs; and with this Preſent ſhe made haſte to meet *David*. *David* was marching with all Speed, to put in Execution his raſh Vow; but *Abigail*, when ſhe met him, approach'd him with that Reſpect, and addreſs'd him † in ſuch moving Language, that ſhe ſoon diſarm'd him of his Rage, and ſtopp'd the Effects of his Indignation, ſo that they both parted with mutual Satisfaction; *he*, for being thus prevented from ſhedding of Blood, and *ſhe*, for having thus happily ſucceeded in her Embaſſy. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

When ſhe got home, ſhe found her Huſband rioting and drinking; ſo that ſhe deferr'd telling him of what had paſs'd, until he was a little ſoberer the next Morning. But when he came to underſtand the Danger he had been in, he was ſo terrify'd at the Thoughts of it, that ‖ he turn'd quite ſtupid, and, in the Space of ten Days, died: Whereupon *David* ſent for his Wife, and marry'd her, as he did likewiſe another Woman, whoſe Name was *Ahinoam* a *Jezreelite*; for his firſt Wife, who was *Saul*'s Daughter, by her Father's Command, † was at this Time given to another.

The *Ziphites* (as we ſaid before) were always forward to give *Saul* Information, where *David* and his Men were conceal'd; and *His ſaving King* Saul, *when he was in his Power.*

‖ It muſt be obvious to every Reader, that *two Bottles of Wine* would bear no Proportion to the other Parts of the Preſent, nor anſwer the Exigencies, which *David*'s Army might be in, if they be underſtood of ſuch Bottles as are now commonly in Uſe with us: But, in theſe *Eaſtern* Countries, they us'd to carry and keep their Wine and Water in Leathern Bags, made on Purpoſe to hold liquid Things, which Veſſels they call'd, or (at leaſt) we tranſlate them, *Bottles*. Such were the Bottles which the *Gibeonites* brought to *Joſhua*'s Camp, which they ſaid were worn out, and torn in their pretended long Journey, *Joſh.* ix. 13. And of ſuch as thoſe it is not unlikely, that our Saviour ſpeaks, *Matth.* ix. 17. where, in the marginal Note of our old Bible, *Bottles* are explain'd by Bags of Leather, two Skins or Borachios, wherein Wine was carry'd on Aſſes or Camels: And that two ſuch Veſſels as theſe might hold a Quantity of Wine proportionate to the reſt of the Preſent, which *Abigail* carry'd with her, needs not be diſputed. *Howell*'s Hiſtory in the Notes.

† The Speech, which the ſacred Hiſtorian puts in *Abigail*'s Mouth, upon this Occaſion, is certainly an artful Piece of Eloquence, full of fine Turns and Inſinuations; nor is that of *Joſephus*, eſpecially in the Concluſion, much amiſs: ——"Be pleas'd, Sir, I beſeech you, to accept of the good Will of your poor Servant in theſe ſmall Preſents, " and, upon my humble Requeſt, to paſs over the Offence of my Huſband, who has ſo juſtly incurr'd your Diſplea- " ſure; for there is nothing ſo well becoming the Character of a Perſon, whom Providence deſigns for a Crown, as " Clemency and Compaſſion." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. c. 14.

‖ The Words in the Original are, *He became a Stone*, but our Tranſlation has wiſely ſupply'd the Particle *as*, which ſhould always be done, when the Scripture affirms ſomething of another, that is not abſolutely of the ſame Nature. We may obſerve however, that this Manner of Expreſſion is very common among profane Authors. Thus *Ovid* brings in *Ariadne* expreſſing her Grief and Aſtoniſhment at the Loſs of *Theſeus*, who had left her in the Iſland *Dia*:

——Aut Mare proſpiciens in Saxo frigida ſedi,
Quamque Lapis ſedes, tam *Lapis ipſa fui*.

The like Expreſſion is us'd of *Hecuba*, when ſhe ſaw the dead Body of her Son *Polydorus*:

—— duroque ſimillima Saxo
Torpet. —— ——

But in the Caſe of *Niobe*, who is ſaid to be turn'd into a Statue of Stone, *Cicero*, in his *Tuſculan* Queſtions, obſerves, that this Fable only repreſents her perpetual Silence in Mourning: And accordingly *Joſephus* tells us of *Nabal*, that, when his Wife told him of the Danger he had eſcaped, he was ſtruck with ſuch an Aſtoniſhment, that he fell into a dead Numbneſs all over his Body, of which he ſoon died. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, and Diſſert. de Statuâ Salis.

† The Reaſon of *Saul*'s putting this Indignity upon *David*, was to extinguiſh, as far as he could, all Relation and Kindred, and to cut off his Hopes and Pretenſions to the Crown upon that Account: But, as the *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that this *Phalti*, to whom ſhe was given, was a very pious Man, and would never approach her, becauſe ſhe was another Man's Wife, and as *David* had never been divorc'd from her, he receiv'd her again, when he came to the Throne. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Calmet*'s Commentary.

Fr. Algarval Pinx.

NABAL'S FEAST.

Pave sc.

And Abigail came to Nabal: & behold, he held a feast in his house, like the feast of a King: & Nabals hart was merry within him for he was very Drunken. I. Sam^{l}. Chap^{r} XXV. Ver: 36.

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and therefore, underſtanding from them, that he was ſomewhere about the Mountain *Hachilah* †, he took three Thouſand Men, and went in Queſt of him. *David* had Intelligence where *Saul*'s Army lay encamp'd; and therefore going, firſt of all privately himſelf, to *reconnoitre* it, he † took with him at Night his *Nephew Abiſhai*, and, entering the Camp, found *Saul*, and *Abner*, and all the reſt of the Hoſt, faſt aſleep. *Abiſhai* would have gladly made uſe of this Opportunity to diſpatch the King, but *David* would by no Means permit him, for the ſame Reaſons that he had ſav'd his Life in the Cave; only the * Spear and Cruiſe of Water, that were at his Bed's Head, he bid him bring with him, that he might ſhew the King how much his Life had been at his Mercy: And, accordingly, when they got at a convenient Diſtance, *David*, with a loud Voice, call'd unto *Abner*, and, in an † ironical Manner, upbraided him with his Neglect of preſerving the King's Life, ſince his Spear and the Cruiſe of Water, that were ſo near his Bed's Head, were ſo eaſily taken from him: And when *Saul*, upon hearing his Voice, came out of the Camp, and ſpake to him, he expoſtulated with him, much in the ſame Manner as he did, after his Eſcape from the *Cave*, with this additional Complaint, that, by thus expelling him from his own Country, he forc'd him to converſe with *Infidels*, and (as much as in him lay) to embrace their Religion. Whereupon *Saul*, accuſing himſelf of Cruelty, and applauding *David*'s Generoſity, confeſs'd his Guilt, and promis'd, for the future, never to make any farther Attempts upon his Life.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

His Retreating to Achiſh, *and living at* Ziklag.

BUT, notwithſtanding theſe ſpecious Declarations, *David*, who knew the Inſtability of *Saul*'s Temper, and how impoſſible it was for him to live in Safety, while he continu'd in his Dominions, determin'd at laſt to go over to the *Philiſtines*; and, having

† The Inconſtancy, Falſeneſs, and implacable Rage of this Prince is really inconceiveable. Not long ago he was oblig'd to *David* for his Life, and acknowledg'd his Error, and made *David* ſwear, that he would be kind and merciful to his Poſterity; and yet now he openly declares himſelf again his Enemy, and goes in Purſuit of him to kill him. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† This may ſeem a bold and ſtrange Attempt, for two Perſons to go into the Midſt of an Army of three Thouſand choſen Men; but, in Anſwer to this, many Things may be conſider'd: As that, according to the Accounts of many credible Hiſtorians, ſeveral gallant Men have attempted Things of no leſs Danger and Difficulty than this was; that *David* had all along Aſſurance given him, that God would preſerve him in all Dangers to ſucceed in the Kingdom; and that, at this Time, he might have a particular Impulſe and Incitement from God to go upon this Enterpriſe, and might poſſibly be inform'd by him, that he had caſt them into a deep Sleep, that he might give him this ſecond Opportunity of manifeſting to *Saul* his Innocence, and the Juſtneſs of his Cauſe. Not to ſay, that as Secrecy, at this Time, was the great Point, *David* might think himſelf ſafer, in this Reſpect, with one ſingle Companion, than with more. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *The Life of King* David.

* That it was cuſtomary for Warriors, when they laid them down to Reſt, to have their Arms plac'd in Order by them, is evident, from what *Silius Italicus* tells us of *Mago*, *Hannibal*'s Brother:

——————— Nec degener ille
Belligeri Ritûs taurino membra jacebat
Effultus Tergo, & mulcebat triſtia Somno.
Haud procul *Haſta* viri terrâ defixa propinquâ
Et dira è ſummâ pendebat cuſpide Caſſis
Et Clypeus Loricaque, & enſis, & arcus,
Et Telum Baleare ſimul tellure quieſcunt. Lib. vii.

But, long before *Silius*, *Homer* deſcribes the *Thracians* ſleeping in this Manner in their Tents:

Οἱ δ' ἐῦδον καμάτῳ ἀδδηκότες, ἔντεα δέ σφιν
Καλὰ παρ' αὐτοῖσι χθονὶ κέκλιτο εὖ κατὰ κόσμον.
Ρῆσος δ' ἐν μέθῳ ἐῦδε ——— Il. 10.

† The Speech, which *David* makes to *Abner*, according to *Joſephus*, is to this Effect: ——— "Are not you a fit "Man to be a Prince's Favourite, a *General* of his Army, to take upon you the Guard of his royal Perſon, and under "all theſe honourable Obligations, to lie dozing, and ſtretching yourſelf at Eaſe, when your Maſter's Life is in Dan- "ger? Can you tell me what is become of the King's Launce, and the Pitcher of Water, that were this Night taken "by the Enemy out of his Tent, and from his very Bed-Side, and you, in the mean Time, all ſnoring about him, "without knowing any Thing of the Matter? Whether this was Neglect or Treachery, 'tis the ſame Thing; you "certainly deſerve to loſe your Head for it." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vi. c. 14.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

having obtain'd from † *Achiſh*, King of *Gath*, a ſafe Conduct for himſelf and his Retinue, he, for ſome Time, liv'd in the royal City; but, not liking his Accommodation here ſo well, as he grew in Favour with the King ever more and more, he obtain'd of him at laſt to have the † Town of *Ziklag* aſſign'd for his Habitation, and, as ſoon as he was ſettled here, ſeveral of *Saul*'s beſt Officers and Soldiers came over to him. *David* at firſt had ſome Suſpicion of them; but having, for ſome Time, made Trial of their Fidelity, he receiv'd them into his Service, and gave them Commands: And, with this Acceſſion to his Army, he was enabled to make ſeveral Excurſions againſt the ‖ *Amalekites*, and other Nations, in which he was accuſtom'd to kill all, that none might carry Information, and, at the ſame Time, † by certain ambiguous Expreſſions, made the King believe, that the Booty, he brought back with him, was taken from the *Iſraelites*, which was no unpleaſant News. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

In ſhort, to ſuch a Degree of Confidence was he grown with *Achiſh*, that he propos'd taking him along with him to the War, which the *Philiſtines* had at this Time declar'd againſt *Saul*; but ſome of the chief Men about him declaring againſt it, as being apprehenſive, that, in the Day of Battle, he might poſſibly turn againſt them, prevail'd with the King to diſmiſs him. This was an agreeable Turn to *David*; yet he ſo far diſſembled the Matter, that the King (to oblige his *Nobles)* was forc'd to be very preſſing and importunate with him to return to *Ziklag*; which, accordingly he did, and, in his March thither, was join'd by ſeveral of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh* (as thoſe of *Gad* and *Benjamin* had done before) to a conſiderable Augmentation of his Forces. And well it ſo happen'd: For, upon his Return to *Ziklag*, he found that the *Amalekites*

† Whether this was the ſame *Achiſh*, mention'd 1 *Sam.* xxi. 10. with whom *David* took Shelter at his firſt Flight from *Saul*, or ſome Succeſſor of the ſame Name, is a Matter of ſome Conjecture: His being call'd *Achiſh, the Son of Maoch*, ſeems to imply, that he was a different Perſon, becauſe, in the Nature of Things, theſe Words can have no Uſe, but only to diſtinguiſh this *Achiſh* from another of the ſame Name. But whoever it was, 'tis highly probable, that he either had invited *David* to come thither for his Security, or that *David* had ſent before-hand Embaſſadors to treat with him, and to obtain his royal Promiſe of Protection. And this we are the rather induc'd to believe, becauſe both found their Advantage by this Alliance: *David* ſecur'd himſelf againſt the Perſecutions of *Saul*; and *Achiſh*, knowing *David*'s Valour, and the Number of *Troops*, which came along with him, thought he ſhould give a powerful Diverſion to the Forces of *Iſrael*, if he could at this Time attach *David* to his Intereſt. But whether *David* did well or ill, in either ſuing for, or accepting of the Protection of this foreign King, is a Point that we ſhall have Occaſion to diſcuſs hereafter. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries, and *The Life of King* David.

† *Ziklag* was ſituate in the extreme Parts of the Tribe of *Judah* ſouthwards, not far from *Hormah*, where the *Iſraelites* receiv'd a Defeat, while they ſojourn'd in the Wilderneſs. In the Diviſion of the Land of *Canaan*, it was firſt given to the Tribe of *Judah*, Joſh. xv. 31. and afterwards to that of *Simeon*, Joſh. xix. 5. but the *Philiſtines* ſeem all along to have kept Poſſeſſion, ſo that it never came into the Hands of either Tribe, until, by the Gift of *Achiſh*, it became the peculiar Inheritance of *David* and his Succeſſors. Why *David* deſir'd of *Achiſh* the Liberty to retire to this Place, was to avoid the Envy, which the Number of his Attendants might poſſibly occaſion; to ſecure his People from the Infection of *Idolatry*; to enjoy the free Exerciſe of his own Religion; and to gain an Opportunity of enterpriſing ſomething againſt the Enemies of God, without the Knowledge or Obſervation of the *Philiſtines*. *Calmet*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

In 1 *Sam.* xv. 7. we read, that *Saul ſmote the* Amalekites, *and utterly deſtroyed all the People with the Edge of the Sword*; and yet we find here *David* making frequent Incurſions upon the *Amalekites*; and therefore the Meaning of the former Paſſage muſt be, that *Saul* deſtroy'd as many of them as fell into his Hands; for ſeveral of them might make their Eſcape from *Saul* into the Deſerts that lay towards *Arabia Felix*, and upon his Retreat, return and repoſſeſs their old Habitation. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† The Words, wherein *David* anſwer'd this Queſtion of *Achiſh*, *Whither have you made a Road To-Day?* are theſe, *Againſt the South of* Judah, *and againſt the South of the* Jerahmeelites, *and againſt the South of the* Kenites, 1 *Sam.* xxvii. 10. By which Nations *David*, in Reality, meant the *Geſhurites*, and the *Gezerites*, who were both of them Relicts of the *Canaanites*, whom God order'd to be extirpated, and who did, in Truth, live to the *South* of *Judah*; but *Achiſh* underſtood him in a quite contrary Senſe, *viz.* that he had fallen upon his own Countrymen. So that, ſince the Formality of a Lye conſiſts in our impoſing upon thoſe, with whom we converſe, we cannot but allow, that tho' *David*'s Anſwer may not be called a downright Lye, yet it is an *Equivocation*, with an Intent to deceive, badly comporting with that Honeſty, and Simplicity, which became *David*, both as a Prince, and Profeſſor of the true Religion, wherein he is no way to be excus'd, and much leſs to be imitated. *Pool*'s Annotations.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

kites had burnt, and pillag'd the Place, † and carry'd away his two Wives, and all the People that were therein; and (what was no ſmall Acceſſion to this Misfortune) his Soldiers mutiny'd againſt him, as if he had been † the Occaſion of it. *David*, however, marching away immediately, and having gain'd Intelligence which Way the Enemy took, ſoon came up with them; fell upon them, and cut them to Pieces, and not only recover'd all the Perſons, and the Booty, which they had taken, but ſeveral *rich Spoils* likewiſe, that they had robb'd others of in this Expedition, whereof he made *Preſents* to his Friends †.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Saul's *conſulting the Witch of* Endor.

IN the mean Time, the *Philiſtine* Army lay at † *Shunem*, and *Saul* and his Forces were encamp'd in Mount *Gilboa*, from whence having a Proſpect of the Enemy's Strength, † his Courage fail'd him, when he ſaw how much more numerous the *Philiſtines* were, and found, at the ſame Time, that God, in this preſſing Juncture, would not be conſulted by him, nor give him any Inſtructions what to do. He had, ſome Time before, baniſh'd all the *Wizards*, and ſuch as dealt with *familiar* Spirits, out of the Nation; but, being now in the utmoſt Perplexity, † he was reſolv'd to conſult ſome one of this Profeſſion, in order to know what the Fate of this War would be. At *Endor*, about three Leagues from Mount *Gilboa*, he was told there liv'd a * *Witch*, or *Sorcereſs*; and therefore, diſguiſing himſelf, and taking but two Servants with him, that he might not be ſuſpected, he came to the Woman * by Night, and deſir'd of her * to raiſe up the Ghoſt of *Samuel*.

WHETHER

† It may ſeem a little ſtrange, that the *Amalekites*, who had ſo often been cut to Pieces by *David*, ſhould not, upon their Succeſs, ſlay, rather than carry away, the People, which they found in *Ziklag*: But this may be imputed either to their Covetouſneſs, who might keep them for Sale, and to make Money of them as Captives; or to their Cruelty, who might reſerve them for more lingering and repeated Torments; or perhaps for the Gratification of their brutal Luſts; though principally it is to be aſcrib'd to God's over-ruling Providence, who reſtrain'd, and ſet Bounds to their Rage. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† This he might ſeem to be in relinquiſhing his own Country, and coming to *Ziklag*; in provoking the *Amalekites*, by the Slaughter of all that came in his Way; and in going with *Achiſh* to War, while he left the Place, where their Wives and Children were, unguarded. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† His Friends were chiefly thoſe of his own Tribe; but, beſides theſe, we find he ſent to others, *viz.* to the Inhabitants of the City of *Bethel*, which belong'd to the Tribe of *Ephraim*; and this he did, not only in Acknowledgment of the Shelter and Support, which he had receiv'd from them in his Baniſhment, but in Proſpect of their future Favour and Intereſt, in Caſe there ſhould happen a Vacancy in the Throne. *Le Clerc*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

† *Shunem* was a City in the Borders of the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, about five Miles to the South of Mount *Hermon*, according to St. *Jerom* and *Euſebius*; who tells us likewiſe, that *Gilboa* was a Ridge of Mountains, ſix Miles Diſtance from *Scythopolis*, antiently called *Bethſham*; and that *Endor* was a Town in the Valley of *Jezreel*, at the Foot of Mount *Gilboa*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, and *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† The *Philiſtines* muſt have had, on this Occaſion, ſeveral *hir'd* Forces, otherwiſe *Saul* had no Reaſon to have been afraid of them, becauſe the ſmall Tract, which the *Philiſtines* inhabited, could not poſſibly ſupply them with an Army, any Thing equal to the *Hebrews*, who, in ſome of their Wars, have carry'd to the Field ſome hundred Thouſands of Men. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† A ſtrange Infatuation this of *Saul!* He had baniſh'd all Wizards and Sorcerers out of his Kingdom, as a dangerous Sort of People, who made Profeſſion of a wicked and unwarrantable Art; and yet he here enquires after one, and puts his whole Confidence in what he had ſo wiſely exploded before; as if a Witch, with her Incantations, and other diabolical Arts, was capable of allaying the Uneaſineſs of his Mind, or ſecuring him from the Apprehenſions of Danger. It may be obſerv'd however, that he mentions a *Woman*, rather than a *Man* to be conſulted upon this Occaſion; becauſe he might imagine, that the weaker Sex might more eaſily be deceiv'd by evil Spirits, and were generally more addicted to theſe unlawful Practices. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

* The *Septuagint* have called her, *a Woman that ſpeaks from her Belly, or Stomach*, as moſt Magicians affected to do; and ſome modern Authors have inform'd us, that there were Women, who had a *Dæmon*, which ſpake articulately from the lower Part of their Stomachs, in a very loud, though hoarſe Tone:

Umbræ cum faganâ reſonarunt triſte & acutum. HOR. Sat. viii.

* They could not go the direct Way; for then they muſt have paſs'd through the Enemies Camp; and therefore they took a Compaſs, and travelled by Night, that they might not be diſcover'd; beſides that, the Night was the propereſt Time to conſult thoſe, that pretended to *magical* Incantations, it being a common Opinion among the *Greeks*, as perhaps now it might be among the *Hebrews*, that none of the terreſtrial *Dæmons* did appear in the Day-Time. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* It was a common Pretence of *Magicians*, that they could raiſe up Ghoſts from below, or make dead Perſons appear, to declare unto them future Events.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

WHETHER it was the Ghoſt of *Samuel*, which God, upon this Occaſion, permitted to appear, or ſome evil Spirit, whom the Witch, by her *Enchantments*, might raiſe up; but ſo it was, that from this *Spectre* † the Woman learnt, that it was *Saul*, who had employ'd her; and *Saul*, when he ſaw it, bow'd his Face to the Ground. The *Apparition* ſpake firſt, and, demanding the Reaſon, * why he had rais'd him from the Dead, was anſwer'd by *Saul*, that the *Philiſtines*, with a powerful Army, had invaded him, and, in his Diſtreſs, God had forſaken him, and would give no Anſwer, † which Way ſoever he conſulted him: To whom the Spirit reply'd, that, for his Diſobedience, in not deſtroying the *Amalekites*, God had taken away the Kingdom from his Family, and given it to *David*; and, as to the Fate of the War, the *Philiſtines*, † the next Day, ſhould rout his Army, and he and his Sons fall in the Battle. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

SAUL had no ſooner heard his Doom, but he fainted away; and, as he had eaten nothing for ſome conſiderable Time, * the Woman and his Servants with much ado prevail'd with him to take ſome Refreſhment: Which when he had done, he went away, and march'd all Night, that he might come early enough to the Camp next Morning.

THE next Morning the two Armies met, and engag'd, but the *Iſraelites* were forc'd *Is vanquiſh'd by the* Philiſtines *and ſlain.*

——— Cruor in foſſam effuſus, ut inde
Manes elicerant, animas reſponſa daturas. HOR. Sat. lib. i.

And therefore *Saul* addreſſes the Woman, as if he believ'd her Abilities in that Way. This however ſhews, not only the Antiquity of *Necromancy*, but the prevailing Opinion then, that the Soul, after the Death of the Body, did ſurvive; otherwiſe it would have been impertinent for *Saul* to deſire the Woman to raiſe up *Samuel*: Which makes it the greater Wonder, that we have no where, in the *Old Teſtament*, a poſitive Declaration of the Soul's Immortality. *Calmet*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† How the Woman came to know it to be *Samuel*, we may thus imagine. She ſaw an Apparition ſhe did not expect; ſhe knew the Prophet; ſhe knew the Veneration, which *Saul* had for him; ſhe knew that Prophets were only ſent to Kings; and ſhe knew withal, that her Art, whatever it was, had never before that Time exhibited a Perſon of that Figure to her; and from hence ſhe concluded, that the Apparition muſt needs be *Samuel*, and the Perſon, who came to conſult her, in all Probability, was *Saul*. *The Hiſtory of the Life of King* David.

* The Words of *Samuel* are, *Why haſt thou diſquieted me, and brought me up?* Which ſeem to imply, that *Samuel* was rais'd up by the Force of this Woman's Inchantments. But, as it is not in the Power of Witches to diſturb the Reſt of good Men, and bring them into the World when they pleaſe, it is much more rational to think, that the Scripture here expreſſes itſelf in a Manner ſuitable to the Prejudice of the Vulgar, among whom it was a common Notion, that theſe Incantations gave Trouble to the Souls that were at Reſt: For which Reaſon, they were either to be appeas'd by Offerings, or conſtrain'd by the Force of Inchantments; for ſo the Tragedian has inform'd us,

Carmenque magicum volvit, & rapido minax
Decantat ore, quicquid aut placat leves
Aut cogit Umbras. SENECA in OEdip.

† The ſacred Hiſtorian has reckon'd up three ſeveral Ways of enquiring of God, *viz.* by *Dreams*, by *Urim*, and by *Prophets*; and it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that there were the ſame Methods of conſulting their Gods among the *Gentiles*; as it appears by what *Achilles* ſays in the Council of the *Greeks*, when met together to conſider about the Plague which *Apollo* ſent among them:

Ἀλλ' ἄγε δή τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν, ἢ ἱερῆα,
Ἢ καὶ ὀνειροπόλον, καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν.

† The Phraſe wherein *Samuel* expreſſes himſelf, is this, ——— *To-morrow ſhalt thou and thy Sons be with me:* Where the Word *To-morrow* (as ſome Interpreters imagine) is not to be taken in a ſtrict Senſe, becauſe (as they conceive) this Battle was not fought till ſome Time after; but, in the Paſſage before us, there ſeems to be no Reaſon, why *To-morrow* ſhould not be taken literally: For, as *Endor* was at no great Diſtance from the *Iſraelites* Camp, *Saul* might go that Night, conſult the Witch, ſtay, and eat with her, and get back to the Camp before it was light. The next Day the Battle begins; *Saul* is vanquiſh'd; and, ſeeing his Army routed, deſpairs, and ſtabs himſelf. All this might very well be done in the Space of twelve or fourteen Hours; and therefore I ſee no Occaſion why we ſhould depart from the plain Signification of the Words. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* *Joſephus* ſeems to be very warm in his Commendation of this Woman's Generoſity to *Saul*: "She receiv'd him, "treated him, and reliev'd him; and all this ſo chearfully, and ſo frankly, that ſhe gave him all ſhe had, without "any Proſpect of Reward; for ſhe knew, that he was doom'd to die: And, what is more, this ſhe did for the very "Man, whoſe Prohibition had been her Ruin." But he raſhly ſuppoſes, that, in the Words of the *ſacred* Hiſtory, the Narration is accurate, and defective in no one Circumſtance; whereas, for any Thing we know, this Woman was far from being poor; *Saul* had amply rewarded her for raiſing up *Samuel*, and his Attendants might give her a round Price for her Lamb. And though it muſt be own'd, that her Addreſs to the King is tender, and reſpectful enough; yet, whether it proceeded from Fear or Affection, may admit of ſome Debate. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

FEB 61

Pl. 63

SAULS Overthrow and Death.

pa. 649

Saul *took a Sword & fell upon it: and when his* **Armour Bearer** *saw that* **Saul** *was dead, he fell likewise on his Sword and died.* — **1. CHRON. Chap. X. Ve. 4. 5.**

A. M. 2883. &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

forc'd to give Way, and maintain'd a running Fight, until he came to Mount *Gilboa*; where, gaining the Advantage of the Ground, they attempted to rally again, but with as little Succeſs as before. *Saul* and his Sons did all that was poſſible for brave Men to do; but the *Philiſtines* aiming wholly at them, in a ſhort Time, overpower'd them with Numbers, † ſo that *Jonathan*, and two others of his Brothers, *Abinadab* and *Malchiſhua*, were kill'd upon the Spot, and the whole Army put in Confuſion.

SAUL defended himſelf as well as Man could do; but the ſmall Party that remain'd with him being entirely broken, and the † Enemies Archers preſſing hard upon him, he found himſelf ſo weaken'd with his Wounds, and Loſs of Blood, that, for fear of falling into their Hands and being inſulted, he fell upon his own Sword, and ſo died. He had requeſted of his *Armour-Bearer* before this to diſpatch him; but his Armour-Bearer was ſtartled at the Propoſal, and refus'd to do it: However, when he ſaw his Maſter dead, † he *deſperately* follow'd his Example, and, in the ſame Manner, put an End to his Life. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

THE next Day, when the *Philiſtines* came to take a View of the Field of Battle, finding the Bodies of *Saul* and his Sons among the Slain, they ſtripp'd them of their Armour, cut off their Heads, and ſent *Expreſſes* to every Place of their Victory. * Their Armour they ſent to the Temple of *Aſhtaroth*, their Heads they fix'd up in the Temple of *Dagon*, and their Bodies they hung upon Gibbets againſt the Walls of *Bethſhan*. But the Inhabitants of *Jabeſh-gilead*, hearing of this Indignity, and retaining a grateful Senſe of the Services *Saul* had done them, ſent a Party of their beſt Soldiers by Night, who took down their Bodies, and brought them away to *Jabeſh*, where the People firſt † burnt the Remains of their Fleſh: next, honourably interr'd their Bones and Aſhes,

† It was certainly no ſmall Grief to *David* to hear of *Jonathan*'s Death, and a Trial it might be of his Patience, and Reſignation to the divine Will; but ſtill there ſeems to be a Direction of Providence in ſuffering him to be ſlain, that *David* might more eaſily come to the Throne. For, though *Jonathan*, no doubt, would have made a voluntary *Dedition* of it, yet, as he was the People's great Favourite, ſome there might poſſibly be, who would not allow of the Dedition, and ſo a civil War might have aroſe concerning the Succeſſor, which, by his dying in this Manner, was prevented. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† There is no mention of *Archers* in any of the *Philiſtine* Armies, or Battles, before this; in which they are ſaid to have *preſs'd hard upon* Saul, as doubtleſs they were of great Advantage to the *Philiſtines* in making their Attack, 1ſt, Becauſe an Aſſault with this Kind of Weapon was *new* and *ſurpriſing*, and therefore generally ſucceſsful; and 2dly, Becauſe the Arrows deſtroying the *Iſraelites* at a Diſtance, before they came to cloſe Fight, threw them naturally into Terror and Confuſion. And for this Reaſon ſome think, that, when *David* came to the Throne, he taught the *Iſraelites* the Uſe of the *Bow*, (as we read 2 *Sam.* i. 18.) that they might not be inferior to the *Philiſtines*, nor fall into the like Diſaſter, that *Saul* had done; and for this Reaſon it certainly was, that, when he had made a Peace with the *Philiſtines*, he took ſome of their Archers (who, in the following Books, are frequently mention'd under the Name of *Cerethites*) to be his Body-Guard. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *The Hiſtory of the Life of King* David.

† The learned and ingenious Author of *The Hiſtorical Account of the Life of King* David ſeems to make it evident, that *Saul* and his *Armour-Bearer* died by the ſame Sword, *viz.* that which belong'd to the Armour-Bearer. "Now "it is an eſtabliſh'd Tradition of the *Jewiſh* Church, *ſays he*, that this *Armour-Bearer* was *Doeg* the *Edomite*, who, by "*Saul*'s Command, ſlew ſuch a Number of Prieſts in one Day, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 19. and if ſo, then *Saul* and his Exe- "cutioner fell both by the ſame Weapon wherewith they had before maſſacred the Servants of the Lord: Even as "*Brutus* and *Caſſius* kill'd themſelves with the ſame Sword with which they treacherouſly murther'd *Cæſar*; I ſay "*treacherouſly murther'd*, becauſe they lay in his Boſom at the ſame Time that they meditated his Death." Vol. I.

* We have taken Notice before, that it was an antient Cuſtom among ſundry Nations to hang up the Arms, and other Spoils taken from the Enemy, in the Temple of their Gods, as Trophies and Monuments of their Victory; and need only remark here, that the ſame Cuſtom prevail'd among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, as appears from this Paſſage of *Virgil*:

> Multaque prætereà ſacris in Poſtibus Arma,
> Captivi pendent Currus, curvæque ſecures,
> Et criſtæ Capitum, & Portarum ingentia clauſtra,
> Spiculaque, Clypeique, erectaque roſtra carinis. Æneid. vii.

† It is certain that the Uſage among the *Hebrews* was not to burn, but embalm the Bodies of their Dead with *aromatick* Spices; but in this Caſe the People of *Jabeſh* might act otherwiſe, either becauſe the Bodies of *Saul* and his Sons were, by this Time, ſo dry'd, or corrupted, that they were not fit to be embalm'd; or becauſe they were apprehenſive,

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

Aſhes, in a Grove that was near their City; and then, for the Space of † ſeven Days, faſted, and made great Lamentation for them.

From 1 Sam. i to the End.

The Objection.

" THO' the firſt Book of *Samuel* " (whoever its Author was) con- " tains a great Variety of Hiſtory, and " is pregnant with many remarkable " Tranſactions; yet whoever takes an " accurate Survey of them, will find them " ſo loaded with Abſurdities and Contra- " dictions, as utterly deſtroy their Cre- " dibility. For, whatever Motives the " *Iſraelites* might have for carrying the " Ark along with them to the War, if " the real Preſence of God went along " with it, we can hardly conceive how " the *Philiſtines* could poſſibly take it " captive; and if there was no divine " Power attending it, how it came to " work thoſe Wonders, wherever it abode, " and to inflict upon its Enemies ſuch ſore " Puniſhments for their Detention of it.

" Its Enemies indeed (upon this " Suppoſition) had Cauſe enough to endea- " vour to get rid of it; but it is a Matter " of ſome Admiration, why the *Iſrae-* " *lites*, when they had it return'd to " them, did not carry it directly to *Shiloh*, " and there repoſit it in the Tabernacle, " its proper Habitation. It looks indeed, " as if they were afraid of it, and willing " to ſhift it from one to another, after it " had made ſuch Havock among the poor " People of *Bethſhemeſh*, as to deſtroy " above *fifty Thouſand of them*, an incre- " dible Number! merely for preſuming " to peep into it, tho' they had receiv'd it " with the greateſt Reſpect and Congra- " tulations but juſt before.

" The *Iſraelites*, it muſt be own'd, " were upon ſeveral Accounts, a very " rebellious People, but it is difficult to " conceive, where their great Iniquity " lay, in deſiring a King, as other Nations " had; eſpecially, ſince *Samuel*'s Sons " rul'd ſo badly, and God, in his great " Wiſdom, had pre-ordain'd that, when " they came into the promis'd Land, " their Government ſhould be *regal*. " This King, we underſtand, was to be " elected by God; but it looks a little en- " vious, and as if he had *given them a King* " *in his Wrath*, to make Choice of one " out of the *meaneſt* of all the Tribes, " and for no other good Qualification, " that we read of, but merely the *Tall-* " *neſs* of his Stature. The State and Dig- " nity however, to which he was ad- " vanc'd, was not ſo great, ſince, after " his Election, we find him *(a)* acting " in the Capacity of a *Shepherd*; nor was " his Enjoyment of the Throne attended " with much Felicity, ſince God turn'd " his Enemy ſo ſoon, and rejected him, " for not deſtroying the whole Race of " the *Amalekites*.

" *(b)* God's Command indeed, to " have every Thing belonging to *Amalek*, " Men and Women, Infants and Suck- " lings,

apprehenſive, that if they ſhould embalm them, and ſo bury them, the People of *Bethſhan* might, at one Time or other, come and dig them up, and fix them againſt their Walls again; and therefore the *Jabeſhites* thought it adviſeable to recede from their common Practice, and, for the greater Security, to imitate the *Heathens* in this Particular:

Κλαίοντες δ' ἰτάροιο ἑηΐοιο ὀστέα λευκὰ
Ἄλλεγον ἐς χρυσείην φιάλην. Hom. Il. xxiii.

Calmet's and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† It ſeems a little ſtrange, that we no where read of any general Mourning that was made for *Saul* and his Sons, who died in Battle; but the *national* Troubles which follow'd upon his Death, might perhaps be an Obſtruction to this. *David* and his Men mourn'd but *one* Day for *Saul*: And therefore when it is ſaid of the *Jabeſhites*, that they faſted *ſeven* Days, their Faſting muſt not be underſtood in a ſtrict Senſe, as if they eat nothing all this Time, but in a more large and general Signification, as it is us'd both in *ſacred* and *prophane* Writers, *viz.* that they liv'd very abſtemiouſly, eat little, and that ſeldom, and that but mean Food, and, inſtead of Wine, drank Water only. *Calmet*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

(a) 1 Sam. xi. 5. *(b)* Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, p. 273.

A. M. 2888. &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116. &c.

" lings, Oxen and Sheep, Camels and " Aſſes, utterly deſtroy'd, for an Offence " done four hundred Years before, and to " proſecute Revenge upon a People, " whoſe only Crime was, their being the " unhappy Deſcendants of thoſe, who " had originally done it; ſeems to bear as " hard upon the Juſtice and Goodneſs of " God, as his ſending *Samuel* to *Bethlehem* " to anoint *David* King, and bidding " him, at the ſame Time, pretend that " he came only to *offer a Sacrifice*, re- " flects upon his Truth and Veracity.

" IT may very well be queſtion'd how- " ever, by what Authority *Samuel* could " offer any Sacrifice (ſince he was not of " the *ſacerdotal* Order) on ſuch Altars as " were prohibited, and in ſuch Places as " were not appointed for theſe Offices, " to the manifeſt Violation of God's " Laws: And much more may it be " wonder'd at, that a Man of his pacifick " Character ſhould fall upon a poor cap- " tive King, and cut him in Pieces with " his own Hands, even in the Preſence of " his own *Sovereign*, who, out of his " Clemency, had thought proper to ſave " him; and ſo ſetting himſelf above the " Juriſdiction of *God's Anointed*, and flying " in the Face of his Authority.

" WHAT *Saul*'s particular Diſtemper " was, 'tis no eaſy Matter to determine; " but ſince the Scripture expreſſes it by " *(c) an evil Spirit from the Lord*, 'tis " difficult to conceive, how *David*, by " playing upon his Harp, (even *(d)* tho' " he might ſing to it likewiſe) cou'd ever " be able to *diſpoſſeſs* him. The Power " of Muſick is confeſſedly great; and yet " we find it had little or no Effect upon " *Saul*, ſince he ſtill continu'd craz'd and " delirious. For to what other Cauſe can " we impute his *(e)* ſtrange Forgetfulneſs " of *David*, who had been ſo frequently " in his Preſence, and *(f) found* ſuch " *Favour in his Sight*; *(g)* whoſe Atten- " dance he had requeſted of his Father, " and whoſe Service in curing his Malady, " he had requited with the honourable " Poſt of his *Armour-Bearer*; with " whom *(h)* he had a Conference but juſt " before, and ſeen him both put on and " off his Armour, and after all this, could " any, but a Mad-Man, enquire of his " *General* (who knew it ſeems as little as " his Maſter) *(i) whoſe Son this Stripling* " *was?* From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

" WHETHER *David* himſelf was " really delirious, or only pretended to " be ſo, when he came to the Court of " *Achiſh*, is a Queſtion, that admits of " ſome Debate; but it ſeems as if he were " not much better, when he made not " only *Gath*, which was the *Capital* of " the *Philiſtines*, and the City where " *Goliah* had dwelt, the Place of his " Refuge, but (as if he meant on Purpoſe " to provoke the Inhabitants thereof) took " the Sword of the *Champion* along with " him, whom he had ſo lately ſlain. Well " was it for him, if, to ſecure him from " Harm, God depriv'd him of his Senſes " at this Juncture. For to extricate him- " ſelf from a *Premunire* he had voluntarily " run into, by perſonating the *Mad-Man*, " or pretending to be a Fool, was but a " *mean* Trick; as his opening an *Aſylum* " afterwards, not for his own *Relations* " only, but for every one, that was in " Debt, or Diſtreſs, or Diſcontent with " the Government, was certainly an *unjuſt* " *Artifice*.

" *SAUL* certainly was his avow'd " Enemy, and purſu'd him with impla- " cable Malice; and therefore it would " have been much more excuſable in " him, if he had eas'd himſelf of this " Adverſary, when Providence threw Op- " portunities in his Way, than to meditate " the Murther of *Nabal*, and his Family, " *(k)* merely becauſe he would not pay " Contributions to him, and his Gang of " *Deſperadoes*: And, tho' Reſervedneſs to " an Enemy may be very commendable, " yet

(c) 1 Sam. xvi. 14. *(d) Joſephus*'s Jewiſh Antiq. lib. vi. cap. 9. *(e)* 1 Sam. xvii. 55. *(f)* Ibid. xvi. 22. *(g)* Ibid. xvi. 21. *(h)* Ibid. xvii. 38, 39. *(i)* Ibid. Ver. 56. *(k)* Ibid. xxii. 2.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſt 1116, &c.

" yet his deep Diſſimulation to *Achiſh*,
" when there was no Occaſion for it; his
" entering into League with the Enemy
" of his Country, joining his Forces, and
" going to War with him; promiſing him
" great Services, if once they came to
" Action, and when he was deſir'd to
" withdraw, parting with the utmoſt Re-
" luctance, are Inſtances of ſuch a baſe
" and perfidious Spirit, as a brave Man
" ſhou'd rather chuſe to die, than be guilty
" of.

" *(l)* In a Word, however *David* may
" be called in Scripture *the Man after*
" *God's own Heart*, yet in theſe, and
" ſeveral other Inſtances, he is found
" ſadly *prevaricating*, and much inferior
" to the Character of *Saul*, who ſcorn'd
" to make uſe of any mean Arts, even
" for the Preſervation of his Life; who,
" inſtead of betaking himſelf to the Ene-
" mies of God for Shelter, (as *David* did)
" choſe voluntarily to die, rather than to
" fall into their Hands; and *(m)* tho' he
" knew aſſuredly that he was to fall in the
" Battle, yet perſiſted in his Reſolution to
" ſtand by his Fate, rather than betray
" his Army, or expoſe his royal Dignity
" to Scorn."

Anſwer'd, by ſhewing why the Iſraelites *ſent for the Ark.*

In the fourth Chapter of this Book of *Samuel* we read, that, upon a Defeat, which the *Iſraelites* had receiv'd from the *Philiſtines*, the Elders of *Iſrael* advis'd together in Council what might be the Occaſion of their ill Succeſs; *Wherefore* ſay they, *hath God ſmitten us to-day before the* Philiſtines? The Juſtneſs of their Cauſe, they thought, was enough to entitle them to God's Favour, how wicked ſoever they were in their Lives; and therefore, without any Thoughts of amending theſe, they devis'd another Expedient that would not fail of ſecuring them Victory: *(n) Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord*, ſay they, *out of* Shiloh, *that when it comes among us, it may ſave us out of the Hand of our Enemies.* *(o)* They had good Reaſon to look upon the Ark of the Covenant as a certain Token of the Preſence of God among them, and of his Protection over them. They had had frequent Experience of Battles won by Virtue of its Preſence, and loſt in the Abſence of it; and whenever they had this Token of the divine Aſſiſtance along with them, they always eſteem'd themſelves invincible. They remember'd the Story of the Walls of *Jericho (p)* falling down by the Power of this Ark's ſeven Times ſurrounding them. They had heard *(q)* of the Defeat which their Foreſathers had ſuffer'd, when they preſum'd to march againſt the *Canaanites* without their Leader, and without this Ark; and were fond enough to imagine, that God himſelf might be look'd upon as overcome, if the *Philiſtines* ſhould have the Advantage, when the Ark of his Preſence was with them. By this Means therefore they thought to intereſt his Honour in the War, and make him reſponſible (as it were) for any Diſaſter that ſhould befal them; and upon theſe Motives it was that they ſent for the Ark.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

And why God ſuffer'd it to be taken by the Philiſtines.

But, becauſe they preſum'd to ſend for it, without ever conſulting God, as they us'd to do upon all momentous Affairs; becauſe the Iniquities of the People were become ſo enormous, as not to deſerve any longer the divine Preſence among them; and becauſe the Flagitiouſneſs of the Prieſts (who were kill'd in defending the Ark) had for a long Time call'd for ſome Judgment upon them; that therefore his Predictions, concerning the Sons of *Eli*, might be fulfill'd, he permitted the Ark to be taken, as thinking it more inconſiſtent with his Honour to afford Aſſiſtance to the Wicked and Preſumptuous, than to admit of the Prophanation even of the moſt ſacred Things. What an Affliction the Loſs of this Ark was to the People of *Iſrael* we may learn from the ſad Fate of *Eli*, and his Daughter-in-Law, who both died for Grief at the bare Hearing

(l) Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, p. 224. *(m)* *Joſephus*'s Jewiſh Hiſtory, lib. vi. cap. 14. *(n)* 1 Sam. iv. 3. *(o)* *Calmet*'s Commentary. *(p)* Joh. vi. 4. *(q)* Numb. xiv. 44, 45.

A. M. 2888. &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116. &c.

Hearing of it: And therefore we may ſuppoſe, that a farther Reaſon for God's permitting it, might be, to bring his own People to a Senſe of their Apoſtacy and Ingratitude to him, when they came to conſider, what a Damage they ſuffer'd in the *Departure* of this Symbol of his Preſence, which was deſervedly eſteem'd *(r)* the *Glory of* Iſrael.

WHAT Afflictions the taking or withholding the Ark brought upon the *Philiſtines*, the Fall of their God *Dagon*, the Mice, the Emerods, the Peſtilence, and other ſore Judgments do abundantly teſtify; and therefore we may ſuppoſe yet farther, that God's Deſign, in permitting this *Capture* of the Ark, was to demonſtrate his Power among the *Heathens*, and to let the *Philiſtines* know, that his Dominion reach'd every where; that he was equally the Lord both of the Conquerors and Conquered; and that the pretended Deities, whom they ador'd, in Compariſon of him, were of no Avail.

'TWAS from an Intent therefore to illuſtrate his Almighty Power, and not from any Inability to preſerve it, that God ſuffer'd this Ark of the Covenant to be taken; and tho' what the *Jews* call the *Schechinah*, or viſible Token of God's Preſence, which abode under the two Cherubims upon the *Propitiatory*, or Covering of the Ark, in the Shape of the Cloud, might not be ſo apparent, after it fell into the Hands of the *Philiſtines*; yet that it had divine and miraculous Power attending it, is evident by their own Confeſſion, who, upon ſeeing the Deſtruction, that its Preſence had occaſion'd, do frankly declare, that *(s) the Ark of the God of* Iſrael *ſhould not abide with them, becauſe his Hand was ſore upon them, and upon* Dagon *their God.*

Why God ſlew the Bethſhemites.

IT was a particular Prohibition, *(t)* that not only the common People, but even the *Levites* themſelves ſhould not dare to look into the Ark, or any other of the holy Utenſils belonging to the Service of God, upon Pain of Death; and the Severity of this Law will not ſeem ſo unreaſonable, when it is conſider'd, that, in every Nation it was always accounted a great Prophaneneſs, and frequently attended with exemplary Puniſhments, for ſuch as were not initiated, *(u)* to obtrude into the Myſteries of Religion; and that, if the *Philiſtines*, for their Irreverence to the Ark, were treated with leſs Rigour than the *Bethſhemites*, it was becauſe the former were not inſtructed in the Laws of God, nor oblig'd to obſerve them.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

And to what Number.

IT muſt be acknowledg'd indeed, that there is a Miſtake in our Tranſlation, as well as in ſeveral others. *Bethſhemeth* is a Place of no great Note in ſacred Hiſtory, and *(x)* by *Joſephus* it is called no more than a Village; and therefore it is hardly conceivable, how it could contain ſuch a Number, as *fifty Thouſand and threeſcore and ten* Inhabitants, or why God, who is Goodneſs itſelf, ſhould make ſuch a Slaughter among thoſe, who receiv'd his Ark with ſo much Joy, and teſtify'd their Gladneſs by their Oblation of Sacrifices. To ſolve this Difficulty therefore, ſome have obſerv'd, that the Words in the Original, and, according to their natural Conſtruction, ſtand thus:——He ſmote of the People *threeſcore and ten Men, fifty Thouſand Men*; where there is plainly wanting ſome Particle or other, to make the Senſe compleat. They obſerve further, that, if this is to be taken for a total Sum, the Order of the Words is plainly inverted, and that the *Thouſands* ſhould go before the *inferior* Numbers, as is uſual in all Languages; and therefore, ſince there is a manifeſt Defect in the *Copy*, they think it not amiſs to ſupply it with the Particle *Mem, out of*, which, in many other Inſtances, is known to be omitted, and here makes the Senſe compleat; *viz.* that, of the People of *Bethſhemeſh*, for their Irreverence to the Ark, he ſmote *ſeventy Men out of fifty Thouſand.* For, tho' fifty

(r) 1 Sam. iv. 22. *(s)* Ibid. v. 7. *(t)* Numb. iv. 20. *(u)* Vide *Huetii* Quaſt. Alnet. Lib. ii. Cap. 12. Pag. 200. *(x)* *Jewiſh* Antiq. Lib. vi. Cap. 2.

A. M. 1888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

Thouſand Men can hardly be ſuppos'd in ſo ſmall a Place; yet, upon hearing of the Arrival of the Ark, the Country might flock in from other Parts, and, in a few Days, make up that Number; and tho', poſſibly, moſt of them might be guilty of the ſame profane Rudeneſs, yet God, in his great Clemency, might puniſh no more than *ſeventy of them*, and that, on purpoſe to deter others from the like Irreverence. For it is not unlikely, that theſe People might hold the Ark in more Contempt, ſince the Time that it had been conquer'd, (as it were) and led captive by their Enemies; and, for this Reaſon, God might the rather exert his *vindictive* Arm, on purpoſe to teach them, that this *Symbol* of his Preſence had loſt none of its miraculous Power, by the ill Uſage it had met with in its Abſence.

Why the Ark was not carry'd to Shiloh.

UPON the Removal of the Ark from *Bethſhemeſh*, *(y)* it is not unlikely that there was a general Aſſembly of the Elders of *Iſrael*, and that, to prevent the like Offence, the Ceremony was perform'd with the greateſt Order and Solemnity; but why it was not carry'd to *Shiloh*, and repoſited in the Tabernacle, the moſt probable Opinion is, that, after the Death of *Eli*, the *Philiſtines* had deſtroy'd the Place, and the Tabernacle was remov'd from thence to *Nob*, where it continu'd until the Death of *Samuel*. As *Kirjath-jearim* therefore ſtood at no great Diſtance, was a Place of conſiderable Strength, and had a remarkable Eminence in it, proper for the Reception of the Ark, thither it was order'd to be remov'd for the preſent, with a Deſign, no doubt, to have it reſtor'd to its antient Seat, at a convenient Seaſon: But, through the Neglect of Religion, as well as the Diſturbance of the Times, its Removal was deferr'd from Day to Day, ſo that, tho' *David* firſt brought it to the Houſe of *Obed-Edom*, and then to his Palace at *Sion*, yet we no where read † of its being replac'd in the Tabernacle any more.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

The Iſraelites *Offence in deſiring a King.*

WHEN *Samuel* was highly diſpleas'd with the Elders of *Iſrael* for deſiring a King, and thereupon apply'd himſelf for Advice, the Anſwer which God return'd him was this: *(z) Hearken unto the Voice of the People in all that they ſay unto thee; for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I ſhould not reign over them.* Theſe are, no doubt, the Words of an angry *Sovereign*, reſenting the Slight put upon his Government, and the Indignity done to his Perſon; and therefore, to give a full Anſwer to the Objection, we ſhall firſt conſider the Nature of the Government they were under, and of that which they deſir'd, and from thence deduce the ſeveral Aggravations of their Guilt, in being ſo importunate for a Change.

The Nature of Theocracy.

JOSEPHUS, *(a)* in his Book againſt *Apion*, has theſe remarkable Words; "Several Nations have their ſeveral Forms "of Government, and their Diverſities of "Cuſtoms. Some Governments are com-

"mitted

(y) *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† The future Hiſtory of this ſacred Ark is this:———After the Building of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, *Solomon* had it remov'd from *Sion*, into a proper Place that was conſecrated for it, where it remain'd with all ſuitable Reſpect, till the Times of the latter Kings of *Judah*, who gave themſelves up to Idolatry, and were not afraid to put the Images of their Gods in the *Holy Place* itſelf. Hereupon the Prieſts, being unable to endure this Profanation, took the Ark, and carry'd it from Place to Place, that, by this Means, it might eſcape the Fury of theſe impious Princes: But *Joſiah*, who was a good Man, and reſtor'd the true Worſhip of God, commanded them to bring it back to the Sanctuary, and forbad them to carry it into the Country, as they had done. The *Talmudiſts* however have a Tradition, that *Solomon*, having learn'd by Revelation, that the *Aſſyrians* would one Day burn the Temple, which he had lately built, and carry away all the rich Materials, which he had plac'd there, took care to have a private Hole made under Ground, where, in Caſe of Neceſſity, he might conceal the moſt valuable Things belonging to it from the Knowledge of any Enemies; and that *Joſiah*, having a Foreſight of the Calamities, which were coming upon the *Jewiſh* Nation, *here* hid the Ark of the Covenant, together with *Aaron*'s Rod, the Pot of *Manna*, the High-Prieſt's *Pectoral*, and the *holy Oil*; but that, during the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, the Prieſts having loſt all Knowledge of the Place, where theſe Things were concealed, they were never ſeen more, and were not in the ſecond Temple. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Ark*.

(z) 1 Sam. viii. 7. *(a)* Lib. ii.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

" mitted to a ſingle Perſon, others to a " certain Number of ſelect Men, and " others again to all the People in general; " but our Lawgiver, *ſays he*, has declar'd, " that ours ſhall † be a *Theocracy*, and " has aſcrib'd all Rule, and ſovereign " Power, to God alone." For, tho' it was neceſſary, for the due Execution of his Commands, that there ſhould be ſome viſible Miniſter between him and his People, ſuch as *Moſes* and *Joſhua* were in the Time of their Adminiſtration; yet it is certain, that they never ordain'd any thing of Moment without a ſpecial Command from him. The ſame Direction which was given *Joſhua*, that *(b) he ſhould ſtand before* Eleazar *the Prieſt, who ſhould aſk Counſel for him, after the Judgment of* Urim *before the Lord*, was requir'd of all other Perſons, that preſided in publick Affairs. *(c)* In all Caſes of weighty Concern, they were to have Recourſe to him, who always reſerv'd to himſelf the ſole Power of eſtabliſhing Laws, and appointing Magiſtrates, and making War. Nay, ſo very deſirous was God to ſhew himſelf to be King of the *Hebrews*, that there was no Enſign of Royalty belonging to earthly Princes, that, by his own Appointment, was not provided for him, on purpoſe to engage the People's Attention, (as the Commentator on *Maimonides* ſpeaks) and to make them perceive, that their King, who was the *Lord of Hoſts*, was in the midſt of them.

WHAT Deſign God Almighty had in conſtituting himſelf the King of this People, is evident from the Inſtructions which he gives *Moſes*. *(d) Thus ſhalt thou ſay to the Houſe of* Jacob, *and tell the Children of* Iſrael; *ye have ſeen what I have done unto the* Egyptians, *and how I bore you on Eagles Wings, and brought you unto myſelf: Now therefore, if ye will obey my Voice indeed, and keep my Covenant, then ye ſhall be a peculiar Treaſure unto me above all People; for all the Earth is mine, and ye ſhall be unto me a Kingdom of Prieſts, and an holy Nation.* From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

And the Crime of rejecting it.

NO Government can certainly be imagin'd more happy, more ſafe, more free, more honourable, than that, wherein the Fountain of all Wiſdom and Power, of all Juſtice and Goodneſs, preſides; and therefore the leaſt that we can ſay of the *Iſraelites*, in deſiring to change this *Form* for ſuch a one, as was in uſe in the Nations round about them, *i. e.* for an *abſolute* and *deſpotick* Government, where the Princes were Tyrants, and the Subjects all Slaves, argues at leaſt a great Pitch of Folly and Indiſcretion, a Baſeneſs of Mind, an Ingratitude of Temper, a Spirit of Rebellion, and a ſecret Attachment to the idolatrous Practices of thoſe People, whoſe King they were ſo eager to imitate. For, *Make us a King to judge us*, was equivalent in their Mouths, (as *(e)* one expreſſes it) to what their Fore-fathers demanded of *Aaron*, *(f) Make us Gods that they may go before us*; becauſe in this Manner, he, who beſt knew the Secrets of

† As God's Deſign, in ſeparating the *Iſraelites* from the reſt of Mankind, was to perpetuate the Knowledge of himſelf, and the Doctrine of his Unity, amidſt an *Idolatrous* and *Polytheiſtick* World; ſo was he pleas'd to ſtand in two *arbitrary* Relations towards them, in that of a tutelar Deity and Protector, and in that of a ſupreme Magiſtrate and Law-giver; beſides the *natural* Relation, in which he ſtood towards them and all other Nations in common: But how long this *Theocracy* continu'd among the *Jews*, the Learned are not ſo well agreed; ſome thinking, that, from the firſt Commencement of Regal Power, or eſpecially from its firſt Settlement in the Line of *David*, it ceas'd, as God's Words to *Samuel* ſeem to import, *they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I ſhould not reign over them*, 1 Sam. viii. 7. Whilſt others imagine, that, from God's firſt eſpouſing the Cauſe of the *Iſraelites*, in the Time of their Tribulation in *Egypt*, even to the Coming of his bleſſed Son our Saviour *Chriſt* in the Fleſh, it all along ſubſiſted, tho' with ſome Abatements, ſometimes with ſeeming Interruptions; and to this they apply that famous Prophecy of *Jacob*, *The Sceptre ſhall not depart from* Judah, *nor the Lawgiver from between his Feet, until* Shiloh *come*, Gen. xlix. 10. *i. e.* The *Theocracy* ſhall continue over the *Jews*, until *Chriſt* come to take Poſſeſſion of his Father's Kingdom. For what Lawgiver was there ever in *Judah*, until the coming of *Chriſt*, but God, by the Miniſtry of *Moſes*? Sentimens de quelques Théologiens Lettre 5, *Simon*'s Hiſtoire Crit. de Vieux-Teſt. and *Warburton*'s Divine Legation of *Moſes*, Vol. II. Part. ii.

(b) Numb. xxvii. 21. *(c)* *Patrick*'s Commentary. *(d)* *Saurin*'s Diſſert. 25. Vol. IV. Exod. xix. 3, &c. *(e)* *Saurin* Ibid. *(f)* Exod. xxxii 1.

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of their Hearts, in his Anſwer to *Samuel*, has expounded their Meaning: *They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I ſhould not reign over them; according to all the Works which they have done, ſince the Day that I brought them up out of* Egypt, *even unto this Day, they have forſaken me, and ſerved other Gods.*

Why God choſe ſo mean *a Perſon as* Saul, *for their King.*

WE have but one Thing more to remark upon this Subject, and that is,—— that the Manner, in which they demanded a King, was no leſs culpable, than the Ends they propos'd by it: For inſtead of conſulting God upon an Affair of this Conſequence, they went haſtily to *Samuel*, and when, by fair Remonſtrances, he is attempting to diſſuade them from ſo dangerous an Enterprize, they turn *impetuouſly* upon him, and ſay, *nay, but we will have a King*; and this may be the Reaſon perhaps, why *God gave them one in his Anger*, deſcended of the meaneſt Tribe in *Iſrael*, and of the meaneſt Family in that Tribe, to ſhew them, that he himſelf was not ſatisfy'd with their Proceedings, nor could be pleas'd with any Thing, that was extorted from him by undutiful Importunities.

Why he returned to a private Life.

THE Meanneſs of *Saul*'s Family indeed was the Reaſon, that ſome, who were preſent at his Election, openly deſpis'd him, and ſaid, *(g) How can this Man ſave us?* And therefore it is not unlikely, that, as theſe ſeditious Men refus'd to ſubmit to his Government, he might leave the Publick Affairs in *Samuel*'s Hands, and return to his Father's Houſe, and there live privately until ſome Opportunity of better eſtabliſhing his Authority ſhould happen to preſent itſelf. But, even in this Interval, ſuppoſing he did betake himſelf to ſome *rural* Employment, yet where is the great Diſparagement of this, when we find the ſame done in other Nations, by Perſons of the like Rank and Quality? When we find your *Curii*, your *Attilii*, your *Cincinnati*, and ſeveral other illuſtrious *Romans*, leaving the Plough to aſſume the Reins of Government, and, afterwards, leaving the Government to return to the Plough?

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

His Tallneſs no mean Accompliſhment.

IT muſt be acknowledg'd, however, that *Saul*'s external Qualifications, *viz.* the Stature, and Comelineſs of his Perſon, was no ſmall Recommendation to a People, who deſir'd a King, ſuch as their Neighbours had. For, whatever we may think of the Matter, the People of the *Eaſt* had always a Regard to theſe in the Choice of their Kings; and accordingly, *Herodotus*, having taken a Review of *Xerxes*'s whole Army, after a ſhort Pauſe, declares himſelf thus:——That, *(h) among ſuch a Multitude of People, there was not one, who, for Tallneſs and Goodlineſs of Perſon, did deſerve the Throne*, ſo much *as he*; and, in another Place, aſſures us, that *(i) the* Ethiopians *always eſteem'd him, who was of the moſt advantageous Stature, the fitteſt to be choſen King*; which cannot but remind us, of what *Samuel* ſays to the People, when he preſents *Saul* to them: *(k) See ye him, whom the Lord hath choſen, that there is none like him among all the People*; for the Hiſtorian had told us before, that, *(l) from his Shoulders and upwards, he was higher than any of the People.*

NAY, had I Leiſure to gratify the Curious, I might ſhew, that, not only in the *Eaſt*, but in the *Weſtern*, and moſt polite Countries, this Tallneſs of Stature, and Gracefulneſs of Appearance were always deem'd no unbecoming Qualifications for the regal Dignity; and therefore we find *Pliny*, who certainly was a fine Speaker, and knew how to ſingle out the proper Qualities in any great Man, telling his Audience, in his Panegyrick to *Trajan*, that *the Strength and Tallneſs of his Body, the Nobleneſs of his Aſpect, the Dignity of his Countenance, and the Gracefulneſs of his Speech, did every where denote and proclaim the Prince:* As, on the contrary, what Notions the Antients had of a Prince of a low Stature, and mean Appearance, we may gather from the *Fine*, which,

(g) 1 Sam. x. 27. (h) *Herodotus*, lib. vi. c. 77. (i) Ibid. lib. vi. c. 20. (k) 1 Sam. x. 24. (l) Ibid. ix. 2.

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which, *(m) Plutarch* tells us, the *Lacedæmonians* ſet upon their King, for marrying a little Woman, who was likely to bring, ὐ Βασιλέας, ἀλλὰ Βασιλίσκους, *not Kings, but Kinglings* to reign over them.

Saul's other Qualifications.

IT muſt be remember'd however, that Tallneſs of Stature was not the only Thing that recommended *Saul* to the Kingdom. His Father is ſaid to have been *(n) a mighty Man of Power*; which, tho' it may not ſignify his great Wealth, and Intereſt in his Country, (becauſe *(o) Saul* himſelf declares the contrary) yet it doubtleſs denotes his Strength, and Courage, and Fortitude of Mind, which, in a great Meaſure, he tranſmitted to his Son. For, who in War was more brave and undaunted than he, had he but known how to uſe his Victories, as well as acquire them? But here was his great Misfortune, that, when he was ſucceſsful, he was too apt to be unmindful of what God had enjoin'd him. Who in Peace was more prudent, and politick, than he, till his Fears and Jealouſies of *David*, mix'd with an unhappy Temper of Blood, made him malicious and implacable? Nothing can be ſuppos'd more wiſe and diſcreet, than his *(p) holding his Peace*, and taking no Notice of the Slights, which were put upon him at his firſt Election; nothing more great and generous, than his Anſwer to ſome, who would have prompted him to Revenge, after he had eſtabliſh'd his Throne by a glorious Conqueſt: *(q) There ſhall not a Man be put to Death this Day; for to Day the Lord hath wrought Salvation in* Iſrael.

NOTHING certainly was more different, than *Saul*'s modeſtly declining the Offer of a Kingdom; when elected, paſſing by Indignities, and returning to a private Life; when called out to Action, muſtering his Forces, leading out his Armies, vanquiſhing his Enemies, relieving his Friends; and, when ſettled in Peace, forgiving Injuries, and conferring Benefits; and the ſame *Saul*, ſullen and diſcontented with himſelf, falſe to his Promiſes, jealous of his Friends, liſtening to Sycophants, quarrelling with his Relations, attempting the Life of his own Son, murthering a whole City of God's Prieſts, and, inſtead of conſulting the Divine Oracle, flying to the Devil for Advice in his Diſtreſs: And therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find the Beginning of his Reign ſo proſperous, and the latter Part of it ending in ſo ſad a *Cataſtrophe*.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End

That he deſerv'd God's Severity to him.

WHETHER *Saul* deſerv'd this Fate, or no, we may beſt perceive by a Review of ſome Inſtances, wherein he is ſaid to have offended God. In the Beginning of the third Year of his Reign, the *Philiſtines* rais'd ſo powerful an Army againſt him, that his own Forces, for Fear of them, deſerted in great Numbers. *Gilgal* was the Place of their Rendezvous, and *Samuel*, who had hitherto tranſacted Matters between God and *Saul*, had given him Aſſurance, that, in ſeven Days time, he would come thither, *(r) to offer Sacrifices and Peace-Offerings, and to ſhew him what he was to do*; but (as *Abarbinel* has obſerv'd) every one of theſe Articles he tranſgreſs'd. For, (beſides that he diſtruſted *Samuel*'s Word, or thought it Scorn perhaps, that the *King* ſhould ſtay for a *Prophet*) inſtead of waiting till the appointed Days were expir'd, he call'd for the Sacrifices on the *ſeventh Morning*; inſtead of ordering a proper Perſon to officiate, himſelf adventur'd to offer up the Sacrifice; and, inſtead of enquiring of God in a regular Way, he was determin'd to begin the War without any previous Conſultation: So that, in this Behaviour of his, there were all the Signs of Pride and Ingratitude, Impatience and Diſtruſt, Neglect of God, Contempt of his Prophet, and an apparent Invaſion of the prieſtly Office; upon which Accounts *Samuel* declares, that *(s)* God would reject him, *and not continue the Kingdom* in his Family.

(m) In the Beginning of his Book περὶ παιδῶν ἀγαγῆς. *(n)* 1 Sam. ix. 1. *(o)* Ibid. Ver. 21. *(p)* 1 Sam. x. 27. *(q)* Ibid. xi. 13. *(r)* Ibid. x. 8. *(s)* Ibid. xiii. 14.

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GOD, no doubt, by his divine Omniſcience, foreſaw what other Sins *Saul* would commit, and might therefore, without any Breach of his Mercy, have pronounc'd a peremptory Sentence againſt him; but the Paſſage before us implies no ſuch Thing. It is no more than a Threat, or a ſimple Denunciation of what God would do, if he were not more obſervant for the future, and might have been revok'd had he not perſiſted in his Diſobedience, and committed a much greater Offence againſt the divine Majeſty, in the War againſt *Amalek*.

THE Oppoſition, which theſe People gave the *Iſraelites*, while they were on their Journey to the Land of *Canaan*, provok'd God to ſuch a Degree, that (as the Hiſtorian relates the Matter) he ſwore, that *(t) he would have War with* Amalek *from Generation to Generation*; and therefore commanded *Moſes to write it, for a Memorial, in a Book, and to rehearſe it in the Ears of* Joſhua, *that he would utterly put out the Remembrance of* Amalek *from under Heaven:* And, when they were upon the Point of entering upon the promis'd Land, they were reminded of the ſame Divine Decree againſt that wicked People: *(u) Remember what* Amalek *did unto thee by the Way, when ye were come forth out of* Egypt, *how he met thee by the Way, and ſmote the hindmoſt of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou waſt faint and weary, and he feared not God: Therefore it ſhall be, when the Lord thy God hath given thee Reſt from all thine Enemies round about in the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an Inheritance to poſſeſs it, that thou ſhalt blot out the Remembrance of* Amalek *from under Heaven, thou ſhalt not forget it.* In this Paſſage we have ſome Reaſons aſſign'd, why God was ſo highly incens'd againſt the *Amalekites*. *(x)* They were Deſcendants of *Eſau*, and therefore, by Pedigree, were allied to the *Iſraelites*, and of the Stock of *Abraham*. *(y)* They ſeem to have broke off with the *Edomites* very early, and to have join'd themſelves with the old *Horites*, a Neſt of Idolaters, that liv'd on Mount *Seir*; and ſo turn'd *Apoſtates* from the Religion of *Abraham*. Theſe Apoſtates were the firſt that drew the Sword againſt the *Iſraelites*, who were their Brethren in Blood, and, without any Manner of Provocation, took the Advantage, and came upon their Rear, while they were *feeble, faint, and weary*, which was not only a great Inhumanity, but done with an Intent to defeat God's Deſign in bringing up the People of *Iſrael*, and to hinder, if poſſible, their Entrance into *Canaan*; for which Reaſon the Impiety of theſe People is particularly taken Notice of, *viz. that they feared not God*, but that *their Hand was lift up againſt the Throne of the Lord, againſt* the Throne of the *God of* Abraham, their Father, which was no ſmall Aggravation of their Crime. 'Twas for theſe Reaſons then, that God had determin'd to deſtroy the whole Race of *Amalek*, and had made Choice of *Saul* to put his Decree in Execution: And if, to indulge his own Covetouſneſs, he thought proper to prevaricate in the Matter, he became guilty of the like Sin, (to uſe the Words of the learned Dr *Jackſon*) "as if a Judge, or inferior "Magiſtrate, being intruſted to do Ju- "ſtice in a Matter, unto which his Sove- "reign had peremptorily and determi- "nately ſworn, ſhould, upon a Bribe, or "other ſiniſter Reſpect, neglect his Duty, "and, as much as in him lay, make "his Maſter forſworn." And, as a Judge that would dare to do this, deſerves more Deaths than one; ſo, conſidering the infinite Difference between God and Man, and the long Train of Wickedneſs, which *Saul* afterwards ran into, the Severity can hardly be thought exceſſive, in God's puniſhing his Contempt of this great Command, by the Alienation of the Crown from his Family.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

BUT

(t) Exod. xvii. 13, 14. (u) Deut. xxv. 17, &c. (x) Gen. xxxvi. 12. (y) Scripture vindicated, Part ii.

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Why the Amalekites *were ſo ſeverely dealt with.*

"BUT why ſhould the *Amalekites*, "for Offences committed by their Fore-"fathers ſo many Years before, deſerve "this Puniſhment? Or, ſuppoſe they did, "why ſhould young Children and Infants "ſuffer as guilty, for the Crimes of their "Parents?" Our bleſſed Saviour, in a Caſe ſomewhat like this, has help'd us to a Solution of the former Part of this Queſtion, when he tells the *Jews* of his Time, that *(a) they built the Sepulchres of the Prophets, which their Fathers had killed; that in ſo doing, they allowed, or approved of their Deeds*; and that therefore *the Blood of all the Prophets, which had been ſhed from the Foundation of the World, ſhould be required of that Generation.* From whence we may draw this Inference,——That, when any particular People commit the ſame Crimes, that their Anceſtors did, when they approve of them, when they imitate them, and, by the like Actions, declare, that, if they were in their Circumſtances, they would purſue the ſame Steps, they are juſtly puniſhable, even in Virtue of the Sentence, which paſs'd upon their Anceſtors; and that the divine Suſpenſion of that Sentence, in order to try whether they would reform and amend, is ſo far from being an *Hardſhip*, that the longer it is continu'd, the more it is an Inſtance of God's Mercy, and Patience, and Long-ſuffering.

NOW, whoever looks into the Conduct of the Deſcendants of theſe old *Amalekites*, and conſiders the ſeveral Oppreſſions, which occaſion'd the Exploits of *Ehud*, *Gideon*, *Jephthah*, and *Saul*, will ſoon perceive, that theſe later Generations were every Moment renewing the Rancour and Hoſtilities of their Forefathers againſt the Children of *Iſrael*, and conſequently, were very juſtly compris'd under the Sentence, which had originally paſs'd upon them.

(b) CHILDREN indeed ſhall not be put to Death for their Fathers: But this Prohibition, we muſt obſerve, relates to *Men*, and not to *God*. *(c)* Men, when they put a Child to Death for the Sin of his Father, aſſume an Authority, that they have no Right to. The Law, which authorizes them to puniſh the Father gives them no Power over the Life of the Child; † but God is Sovereign Lord and Maſter of the Lives of both. Men, who kill the Child, to aggravate the Puniſhment of the Father, can give the Child no Equivalent for the Loſs of his Life; but God, in the future Diſpenſation of Things, can render him an ample Compenſation for it; and therefore, ſince in a general Devaſtation, whether of War, Famine, or Peſtilence, without a divine Interpoſition for every particular Perſon, the *Innocent* muſt neceſſarily ſuffer with the Guilty, 'tis Satisfaction enough to think, that theſe innocent Perſons do not finally periſh when they die, but are thence-forward taken under God's immediate Care, and in the World to come, will find their Retribution. *(d)* Thoſe of all others, who die in their Infancy, (in what Manner ſoever it be) have Reaſon to bleſs God, what Grief ſoever it may give their Parents, for being deliver'd out of the Miſeries of this Life, in order to be made happy in another.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Why Samuel *might offer Sacrifices.*

SEVERAL of the *Jewiſh* Doctors are of Opinion, that, after the Death of *Eli* and his Sons, *Samuel*, by God's particular Election, ſucceeded to the High-Prieſt's Office; and this they are the rather induc'd to believe, becauſe they read of his offering Sacrifices in Places diſtinct from the Tabernacle; of his wearing an *Ephod*, which was a Veſtment peculiar to the Prieſt; of his conſecrating two Kings, *Saul* and *David*; and find *(e)* the *Plalmiſt* placing him among Perſons of that Order and Diſtinction. But the more probable Opinion is, that he was no more than a *Levite*, and, by Birth, incapable of the Prieſt-

(m) Luke xi. 47, &c. *(b)* Deut. xxiv. 16. *(c) Saurin's* Diſſert. 30. Vol. IV.

† Deus quidem in Lege Hebræis datâ paternam Impietatem in Poſteros ſe vindicaturum minatur: Sed ipſe Deus jus Dominii pleniſſimum habet, ut in res noſtras, ita in vitam noſtram, ut munus ſuum, quod ſine ulla Cauſa & quovis tempore auferre cuivis, quando vult, poteſt. *Grotius*, de Jure Belli, Vol. II.

(d) Le Clerc's Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xv. 3. *(e)* Pſal. xcix. 6.

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Prieſthood, which was only annexed to *Aaron*'s Family; that there is no Mention made in Scripture of his having any particular Deſignation to that Office; that there is no Reaſon to think, that God would break through his own Laws, and Ordinances, in Favour of him, when there was no Occaſion for it, ſince *Hophni* and *Phineas*, when they died † might have Sons of ſufficient Age to ſucceed them; that his putting on an *Ephod*, was no more than what *David* did; his ſacrificing from the Tabernacle, what *Gideon* and *Saul* did; and his anointing Kings, what both *Elias* and *Eliſha* did; ſo that theſe little Incidents of his Life could never give him that Character. And tho' it be granted, that the *Pſalmiſt* has thought proper to place him in Company with *Moſes* and *Aaron*, yet, at the ſame Time, he has taken Care to point us out the Difference between them; *Moſes* and *Aaron* among the *Prieſts*, and *Samuel among ſuch, as called upon his Name*, i. e. who ſing God's Praiſe, which was the common Employment of the *Levites*. Put the Caſe then, that *Samuel* was no Prieſt, yet it ſeems to be a Privilege indulg'd to ſome great Men, upon ſome extraordinary Occaſions, to offer Sacrifices, where there was neither the Tabernacle, nor any Altar, but what they themſelves erected. Thus *(f) Gideon* and *Manoah* both, by the Directions of an Angel, made their Burnt-Offerings juſt by their own Habitations, and upon no other Altar than a Rock; and yet, that they were accepted by God, is evident from the miraculous Fire, that did conſume them.

In moſt Countries, indeed, the Prieſthood was a Privilege annex'd to the regal Dignity, and even in the *Jewiſh* Oeconomy, where the ſacerdotal Office was diſtinct. Thus *David*, upon the Reduction of the Ark, ſacrific'd Oxen and Fatlings, *(g)* and *Solomon*, in the Beginning of his Reign, and before the Temple was built, ſacrific'd in high Places *(h)*. But there is much more to be ſaid for *Samuel:* He liv'd in a Place, that was an Academy of the Prophets, and whither much People reſorted to be inſtructed in the Law. *Shiloh* was now laid deſolate, and the Ark, which was the Tabernacle's chief Furniture, was ſeparated from it; ſo that, till God had declar'd his Choice of ſome other Place, the People were, in a great Meaſure, at Liberty where to offer their Devotions; and *Samuel* more eſpecially, in a City of ſo great Concourſe, and where he himſelf preſided, was oblig'd in Conſcience to provide the People, in the beſt Manner he could, with a publick Place of Worſhip. He himſelf did but rarely, and upon extraordinary Occaſions, officiate in the Sacrifice, yet that, whenever he did it, he did it with the Acceptance and Approbation of God, is plain from the Teſtimony of Scripture, and the Succeſs, which God gave him againſt his Enemies, after he had perform'd ſuch an Act of Devotion: For thus the Account is, *(i) And* Samuel *took a ſucking Lamb, and offered it for a Burnt-Offering wholly unto the Lord, and* Samuel *cried unto the Lord for* Iſrael, *and the Lord heard him, and the Lord thundred with a great Thunder on that Day upon the* Philiſtines, *and diſcomfited them, and they were ſmitten before* Iſrael.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

* The *Jews* themſelves acknowledge, that a Prophet is not ſubject to the ceremonial Law, but may, at any Time, himſelf ſacrifice in what Place he pleaſes: And therefore, when *Samuel* went to *Bethlehem* to anoint *David*, it cannot be queſtion'd, but that he had a Right to ſacrifice there, tho' there was neither Ark nor Tabernacle in the Place; nor can it be deny'd, but that one Part of his Errand was to offer the Sacrifice, which he carry'd along with him. He had indeed an Affair

Why Samuel *might pretend a Sacrifice at* Bethlehem.

† It is generally ſuppos'd, but without any Grounds, that the Exerciſe of the High-Prieſt's Function was not enter'd upon till ſuch an Age, and that *Eli*'s Grand-Children were not as yet qualify'd for it: But *Joſephus* (Antiq. lib. xv. c. 2.) informs us, that *Ariſtobulus*, the Brother of *Mariamne*, was both admitted into that Place, and officiated in it, when he was no more than ſeventeen Years old. *Calmet*'s Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xxv. 1.

(f) Judg. vi. 20. and xiii. 19. *(g)* 2 Sam. vi. 13. *(h)* 1 Kings iii. 2, 3. *(i)* 1 Sam. vii. 9. 10.

* Authoritas Prophetæ facit, ut ſacrificium, ubicunque is adeſt, & imperat, ritè fiat; ſubſunt enim Prophetæ Imperio Leges rituales, fatentibus Hæbreis. *Grotius*, in 1 *Sam.* xvi. 2.

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fair of greater Conſequence to tranſact at the ſame Time; but I cannot ſee, under what Obligation he was to diſcover that. *(k) Secrecy* is of great Uſe in all important Negotiations, and the concealing of one Deſign, under the Umbrage of another, is as juſt and laudable a Practice, as the drawing of a Curtain to keep out *Spies*. Acts of Religion indeed are ſometimes made *Cloaks* for Iniquity; but 'tis hard to conceive what poſſible Prevarication there could be in performing one Act of Obedience towards God, in order to facilitate the Performance of another. The ſhort of the Matter is, when there are two Ends of any Action, (as there were in the Caſe now before us) a Man may, without any Injury to Truth, declare the one, and conceal the other; nor can any Imputation juſtly fall upon God, for ſuggeſting an Expedient to his Servant, in the Execution of which there confeſſedly was no Sin.

Why he might ſlay Agag.

AND for the ſame Reaſon, becauſe it was by God's Direction, or the Inſtigation of his Holy Spirit, that *Samuel* cut *Agag* in Pieces, we cannot ſay, that this Reſentment carry'd him beyond the Bounds of Reſpect, that was due to his *Sovereign*. *Agag* had been a bloody Tyrant, and was now cut off, not for the Sins of his Anceſtors only, but for his own mercileſs Cruelty. His Death had been predicted above 400 Years before, *(l)* by the Prophet *Balaam*; but *Saul*, out of a miſtim'd Compaſſion, and in Oppoſition to the expreſs Commands of God, had thought proper to ſpare him. Here therefore was a fit Occaſion for *Samuel* to exert himſelf, and, notwithſtanding the Preſence of his Prince, to vindicate the Honour of his God, by expreſſing a Zeal ſuitable to *(m)* that of *Phineas*, in ſlaying *Zimri*, or of that noble Band of *Levites*, *(n)* who deſtroy'd the Worſhippers of the *Golden-Calf*; tho' it does not neceſſarily follow, that he ſlew him himſelf, *(o)* becauſe what he *commanded* might be called *his own Act*, tho' it was nevertheleſs done by the publick *Executioner* of Juſtice.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

What Saul's *Diſtemper was.*

SOME Commentators have been ſo far carry'd away with the Manner of the Scripture Expreſſion, *viz.* that *(p) an evil Spirit from the Lord troubled* Saul, as to think, that he was really poſſeſs'd with a Devil, which at certain Times came ſtrongly upon him, and threw him into all the mad Fits whereof we read: But it ſhould be conſider'd, that the Word *Spirit*, in the ſacred Language, is of a very extenſive Signification, and denotes frequently, not only the Diſpoſitions of the Mind, *(q)* but thoſe of the Body likewiſe; that the Cuſtom of the *Jews* was to imagine, that every Affliction, whoſe Cauſe they were ignorant of, proceeded immediately from God; and that it is a very common Thing to find the Scripture Phraſe accommodating itſelf to this vulgar Prejudice. Now in our Interpretation of Scripture, this, I think, ſhould be a Rule, —— That when a Paſſage is capable of two Senſes, whereof the one ſuppoſes a *Miracle*, and the other a *natural Event* only, the latter ſhould take Place, eſpecially when there are no Circumſtances to determine us to the contrary. But now, in the Caſe before us, *(r)* the frequent Acceſs of *Saul*'s Malady, the Symptoms that attended it, and the Remedy made uſe of to aſſuage it, do ſufficiently denote, that it proceeded from a deep Melancholy, or black Bile inflam'd; and that the Man was *hypochondriack*, rather than *poſſeſs'd*. Agreeable to this bad Complexion of Body was the natural Temper of his Mind, which, through his whole Conduct, was ſuſpicious, diffident, cruel, paſſionate, and vindictive. Add to this, that the Remorſes of his Conſcience, the Menaces of *Samuel*, God's Rejection of him, and his continual Apprehenſions of being either dethron'd, or put to Death by his Competitor, confirm'd ſtill more and more the evil Diſpoſitions which his Diſtemper engender'd, and carry'd them by

(k) Scripture vindicated, Part ii. *(l)* Numb. xxiv. 7. *(m)* Ibid. xxv. 1. *(n)* Exod. xxxii. 27. *(o)* *Patrick*'s Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xii. 33. *(p)* 1 Sam xvi. 14. *(q)* Vide Job xvii. 1. and Hoſea iv. 12. *(r)* *Calmet*'s Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xvi. 14.

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Fits into downright Madneſs: And as Madneſs is occaſion'd by an *atrobilous* Humour highly inflam'd, and diffus'd through the Blood, and from melancholick Vapours, which aſcend to the Brain, and make an Alteration in its Temperature, 'tis no hard Matter to conceive, that the agreeable Sound of a *muſical* Inſtrument, which occaſions Joy and Self-complacency, ſhould diſſipate theſe bad Humours, and make the Blood and Spirits return to their equal and natural Motion.

The Power of Muſick.

What the Power of Muſick is, to ſweeten the Temper, and allay and compoſe the Paſſions of the Mind, we have ſome Examples from *ſacred* Hiſtory, but many more from the *prophane*. As this ſame *Saul* was returning from *Samuel*, he met, at the Place, which is called *(s) the Hill of God*, a Company of Prophets, playing on ſeveral Inſtruments; and ſuch was the Effect of their Melody, *that the Spirit* (as the Scripture expreſſes it) *came upon him, and he was turned into another Man*. When *Eliſha* was deſir'd by *Jehoſaphat*, to tell him what his Succeſs againſt the King of *Moab* would be, the Prophet requir'd a Minſtrel to be brought unto him, *(t) and when the Minſtrel play'd*, 'tis ſaid, *that the Hand of the Lord came upon him: (u)* Not that we are to ſuppoſe, that the Gift of Prophecy was the natural Effect of Muſick, but the Meaning is, that Muſick diſpos'd the Organs, the Humours, the Blood, and, in ſhort, the whole Mind and Spirit of the Prophet, to receive the ſupernatural Impreſſion. The Truth is, common Experience, as well as the Teſtimony of the graveſt Authors, does prove, that there is in Muſick a certain Charm, to revive the Spirits, mellow the Humours, allay the Paſſions, and conſequently, to diſſipate that Rage, or Melancholy, which either fumes up into the Brain in Vapours, or overſpreads the Heart with Grief, and Dejection. We need leſs wonder therefore, that we find *(x)* the *Pythagoreans*, whenever they perceiv'd, either in themſelves or others, any violent Paſſion beginning to ariſe, immediately betaking themſelves either to their Flute or their Guittar; that we find *(y) Theophraſtus* declaring, that Muſick is an excellent Remedy againſt ſeveral Diſtempers, both of the Mind and Body; *(z)* others, that *Aſclepiades*, a renown'd Phyſician among the Antients, was us'd to cure Madneſs by the Power of Symphony; and *(a)* others again, that the moſt violent Poiſon, that of the Sting of the *Tarantula*, has been expelled very frequently by this Means. The only remaining Difficulty is, how *David*, with his ſingle Harp, and unaſſiſted with any other Inſtruments, could effect ſuch a Cure upon *Saul?* And to ſatisfy this, I muſt be oblig'd to enquire a little into the Nature of the *Jewiſh* Muſick, which was poſſibly in Vogue at that Time.

From 1 Sam. 1. to the End.

The Nature of the Jewiſh *Muſick.*

Musick, tho' an Art of no Neceſſity to human Life, was certainly of a very early Invention. Before the Deluge, *Jubal* is called the Father, or Maſter of thoſe who play'd upon the Harp, and † antient Organ, as the two *Hebrew* Words, *(b)* in that Place, are generally tranſlated. In the Time of *Jacob*, we find his Father-in-Law complaining of him, *(c)* that he had ſtolen away from him, and not given him an Opportunity of diſmiſſing him honourably, *with Mirth, and with Song, with Tabret, and with Harp.*

(d) MOSES, upon his Paſſage over the *Red-Sea*, compos'd a Song, which was ſung in Parts by himſelf, at the Head of the Men, and by *(e)* his Siſter, with *Timbrels* and *Dancing*, leading up the Women. *Samuel*, upon his Inſtitution of the Schools of the Prophets, introduc'd ſeveral Kinds of Muſick; ſo that, before *Saul*'s Election

(s) 1 Sam. x. 5, &c. *(t)* 2 Kings iii. 15. *(u)* *Calmet*'s Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xxvi. 17. *(x)* *Ælianus* Var. Hiſt. lib. xiv. c. 27. *(y)* In Libro περὶ ἐνθουσιασμῶν. *(z)* *Cenſorinus*, de Die Natali, lib. xii. *(a)* Vide *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 33.

† This Inſtrument in *Hebrew* is named *Hugab*, and was a Kind of Flute compos'd of ſeveral Pipes, of a different Bigneſs, join'd to one another. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Muſick*.

(b) Gen. iv. 21. *(c)* Ibid. xxxi. 27. *(d)* Exod. xv. *(e)* Ibid. ver. 20.

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tion to the Kingdom, *(f)* we read of the *Pſaltery*, and *Tabret*, the *Pipe*, and the *Harp*, in Uſe among them. The Kings of the *Eaſt* made it a Point of their Grandeur and Magnificence, to have Men to play to them upon ſeveral Occaſions; and therefore we may ſuppoſe, that *Saul*, when he came to the Throne, in ſome reaſonable Time, conform'd to the Mode. *David*, who was himſelf a great Maſter of Muſick, kept in his Houſe *(g)* ſome Companies of *ſinging Men*, and *ſinging Women*, as the Words of old *Bazillai* ſeem to imply; and *Solomon*, who deny'd his Heart no Pleaſure, came not behind his Father in this Reſpect; for he had his *(h) Men Singers* and *Women Singers* likewiſe, and muſical Inſtruments of all Sorts. *Joſephus* tells us, that he made four hundred thouſand, merely for the Uſe of the Temple; and therefore we may well ſuppoſe, that he had no ſmall Variety of them, for the Uſe of the Muſicians, that attended his Perſon.

M. *Le Clerc* ſeems to be of Opinion, that the Muſick of the antient *Hebrews* was not very regular: "They were a "Nation, *ſays he*, entirely given to Agri- "culture, and had neither Theatres, nor "any publick Diverſions of this Kind; "all the Uſe, which they made of their "Muſick, conſiſted in ſinging ſome ſacred "Hymns, which *David* inſtituted; but "we have no Reaſon to think, that their "Performances of this Kind were either "harmonious or methodical:" But now, the learned *Kircher* has confuted all this. For, *(i) It is not probable*, ſays he, *that ſuch an innumerable Quantity of muſical Inſtruments, made by the moſt ſkilful Hands, ſhould ſerve only to produce ſome rude and inartificial Sounds. Among the* Hebrews *there was certainly a wonderful Order of Songs and Chanters, a wonderful Diſtribution of the Singers, and a wonderful Agreement of Words fitted to harmonious Notes; neither is it likely, that all the Inſtruments of one Choir did perform their Parts in Uniſon, but that they made a various Harmony, with an admirable and accurate Contexture of the upper Parts with their reſpective* Baſſes. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

BUT ſuppoſe we, (as ſome) imagine, that they wanted the Harmony of a Concert, or ſeveral Parts of Muſick going on at the ſame Time; yet it is much to be queſtion'd, whether that Simplicity of Compoſition, which reſembles Nature moſt, is not a greater Beauty and Perfection, than that *Combination* of ſeveral Voices and Tunes, which conſtitutes our *Concerts*. For (to uſe the Words of another Author, in a Science wherein I profeſs to be no Adept) "The Antients, *(k)* "*ſays he*, had as great a Number of In- "ſtruments as we; they had their Sym- "phonies, and Voices of all Sorts, as well "as we; but then they had this Advan- "tage above us, that their ſinging Voices, "and Inſtruments neither drown'd the "Words, nor deſtroy'd the Senſe of "what they ſung. While their Ears "were charm'd with the Melody, and "their Hearts touch'd with the Delicacy "of the Song, their Minds were tranſ- "ported with the Beauty of the Words, "with the Livelineſs, Grandeur, or Ten- "derneſs of the Sentiments. So that, "at one and the ſame Time, they had all "the pleaſurable Impreſſions and Senſa- "tions, that the moſt exact Imagery of "Thoughts and Sentiments, join'd with "Symphony, or a true Harmony, could "produce in their Breaſts;" and for this Reaſon it is rightly ſuppos'd by *Joſephus*, that while *David* play'd upon his Harp, he ſung Pſalms and Hymns to King *Saul*, whoſe Words very probably were adapted to the Occaſion, and that both theſe put together were conducive to his Cure; tho' God, without doubt, who gave a Bleſſing to his Endeavours, was the *principal Cauſe of it*.

THAT *David*'s Skill in playing upon the Harp, in a great Meaſure remov'd *Saul*'s Melancholy, is manifeſt from his retiring from Court to his Father's Houſe, and

(f) 1 Sam. x 5. *(g)* 2 Sam. xix. 35. *(h)* Eccleſ. ii. 8. *(i)* Muſurgia Univer. lib. ii. c. 4.
(k) *Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur la Muſique des Anciens.

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and betaking himſelf to his uſual Occupation of a Shepherd. How long he continu'd with his Father the Scripture is ſilent; but a ſhort Time might be ſufficient to impair the King's Remembrance of him, eſpecially when he appear'd in another Dreſs, than what he wore at Court, and was juſt now come off rough from a Journey. He had play'd to the King indeed, and happily reliev'd his Diſorder: But who knows, but that he then wore an Habit proper for his Profeſſion, as a *Muſician*, and (as Cloaths make a great Alteration in a Man) appear'd now quite another Creature in his plain Shepherd's Garb? Who knows, but that the *(l) Miniſter* (whoever he was) that recommended him to the King, finding that his Muſick prov'd *medicinal* to him, might take the Freedom to ſend to his Father, and requeſt that his Son might continue a little longer at Court, even without the King's Knowledge or Direction? And it ſeems not unlikely, that the Office of *Armour-Bearer* (whatever it imported) was a Place of Honour and Reſpect, more than ſtrict Duty and Attendance, becauſe we find *David* ſometimes retiring to his Father's Houſe as not oblig'd always to reſide at Court.

Without our ſuppoſing then, (as ſome Commentators have done) that *Saul*'s Diſtemper had diſturb'd his Head, and impair'd his Memory, we need but conſider the Humour and Faſhions of a Court, the Hurry of Buſineſs, the Multitude of Servants, the Variety of Faces, and the Shoals of Comers and Goers, that are every Day ſeen there; and withal, conſider the momentous Iſſue of a Battle loſt or won, and what full Employ the King or his chief Commander muſt have for all his Thought and Attention, when an Army is drawn up in Array, and ready to engage; and then we may eaſily account both for *Saul*, and *Abner*'s wanting Recollection, when they ſaw *David* diſguis'd in his Shepherd's Coat, and now entering upon an Action, that was quite contrary to the Character of a *Muſician*. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

(m) But, after all, the Words in the Text ſay nothing of *Saul*'s Forgetfulneſs of *David*, or that he enquir'd who he was. They only intimate, that he was ignorant of his Family, and deſir'd to be inform'd from what Parent he was deſcended; and conſidering how many Servants there are in every Court, (eſpecially in a lower Station) whoſe Pedigree the King knows nothing of, and how apt we are all to forget the Names of thoſe, who live at a Diſtance, (as *Jeſſe* did from *Saul*) and with whom we hold little or no Intercourſe, we need not much wonder, that *Saul*, who had no Concern for *David*'s Family before this Adventure, ſhould quite forget the Name of his Father, living in another Country, and which he had curſorily heard perhaps, but never once fix'd in his Mind: But now that the Son was going upon a deſperate Enterprize, and was *(n) to have great Riches*, as well as the *King's Daughter*, if he came off victorious, it did not a little behove the King to know ſomething more of the Parentage of this young Champion, and into what Family he was to match his Daughter: And, upon this Preſumption, there is no Madneſs, no Abſurdity; no Incongruity in his bidding *Abner*, "*(o) enquire whoſe Son the Stripling is.* 'Tis a brave and gallant Youth. "I am charm'd with his Courage, and "Behaviour. If he falls in the Attempt, "he ſhall have an honourable Interment; "if he ſucceeds, and ſlays the Giant, he "ſhall be my Son-in-Law."

Why David retreated to Achiſh.

The *Jews* give a very romantick Reaſon for *David*'s going to *Achiſh*, the King of the *Philiſtines*, viz. that it was to demand an Execution of the Treaty, (whereby the Conqueror was to have a ſovereign Power and Dominion over the Conquer'd) which *Goliah* propoſed, when he challeng'd the *Iſraelites*; and that, upon this Account, the chief Miniſters about that King were ſo alarm'd at his Arrival,

(p) Is

(l) Le Clerc's Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xxvii. 55. *(m) Saurin*'s Diſſert. ſur le Combat de *David*. *(n)* 1 Sam. xvii. 25. *(o)* Ibid. Ver. 56.

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Is not this David, *the King of this our Land? (p)* as ſome take the Words. It is apparent, however, from the Context, that the *Land*, to which theſe Words relate, is *Judea*, and that *David*, at this Time, was in no Condition to make any high Demands.

SAUL's Rancour and Rage againſt him was ſo implacable, and now that ſo many were turn'd Informers againſt him, his Power to apprehend him was become ſo great, that there was no ſtaying any longer in his Dominions; and therefore *David*'s Buſineſs was to find out ſome ſafe Retreat. All the other neighbouring Princes were at Peace with *Saul*, and muſt have deliver'd him up, had *Saul* demanded him. *Achiſh* was the only one in Hoſtility with him, and therefore his Kingdom the moſt proper Place for *David*'s Refuge, where, tho' he might not hope to lay long conceal'd, yet he might nevertheleſs promiſe himſelf kind Quarter, from the Advantages that would accrue to *Achiſh*, in attaching to his Intereſt a Perſon, that was evidently the Strength of the *Jewiſh* and Terror of the *Philiſtine* Army. Hard was the Fate of *David*, it muſt be own'd, when he was forc'd to flee for Protection to thoſe, whom he had Reaſon to believe were his bittereſt Enemies; but many great Men have been compell'd to the ſame Thing; *Themiſtocles* to go over to the *Perſians*, and *Alcibiades* to the *Lacedemonians*, without turning *Apoſtates* to the Intereſt of their Country.

That he might lawfully act the Fool.

SELF-PRESERVATION, is one of the firſt Laws of Nature, and therefore, if *David*, when he came to the Court of *Achiſh*, found his Life in manifeſt Danger, I cannot ſee why he might not make uſe of any Means, conſiſtent with a good Conſcience, for the Preſervation of it. He choſe to perſonate the Fool, becauſe he preſum'd that *Achiſh* would readily conclude, that the Troubles, he had ſuffer'd under *Saul*'s Perſecution of him, had ſtupify'd his Senſes, and turn'd his Head. But he was not the laſt wiſe Man who put on that Diſguiſe; for, *(q)* did not *Solon*, when he found that the *Athenians* were going to ſurrender *Salamine*, his native Country, into the Hands of the People of *Megara*, counterfeit the *Mad-Man*, that he might, with more Impunity, take the Freedom to divert them from it? And *(r) Lucius Brutus*, that *wiſe Imitator of the Fool*, (as he is call'd) made uſe of the ſame Artifice, to eſcape the Suſpicion of *Tarquin*, who had already murther'd his Father, and eldeſt Brother, in order to ſeize on their great Riches.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

BUT ſuppoſing that there were no Examples of other Wiſe-Men to countenance this Practice of *David*'s; yet, where-ever did we read, in the Word of God, that Stratagems were not allowable againſt an Enemy? When the *Iſraelites* beſieg'd *Ai*, God himſelf gave them Orders to make a Feint, as tho' they fled, that they might thereby draw the People out of the City; and can the Difference be ſo great, in pretending to a Want of Courage, and in counterfeiting a Deprivation of Reaſon? A Divine Direction indeed was in the one, and we do not read that it was in the other Caſe; but why might not God, who had *David* always under his immediate Care and Protection, put him upon this Expedient, as the only Eſcape he had for his Life? Or, if the Expedient was Matter of his own Invention, ſince the Circumſtances he was in did abſolutely require it, it cannot deſerve our Blame, according to that common Diſtich, that goes under no leſs a Name than *Cato*'s.

Inſipiens eſto, cum Tempus poſtulat, aut Res,
Stultitiam ſimulare Loco, Prudentia ſumma eſt.

THIS might be ſome *Apology* for *David*'s Conduct at this critical Juncture, ſuppoſing

He did not act a Part, but was ſeiz'd with a Diſtemper.

(p) Vid. *Sol. Jarchi*, ad 1 *Sam.* xxi. 12. (q) *Diogen. Laërtius*, lib. i. in *Solone*. (r) *Dionyſ. Halicarn.* Antiq. Rom. lib. 4.

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ſuppoſing that he perſonated the Fool, or Mad-Man: But if we look into the Scripture-Account of this Tranſaction a little more narrowly, we may poſſibly perceive, that *David* did not diſſemble, or act a Part upon this Occaſion, but that he was really ſeiz'd with a Diſtemper, and that Diſtemper, in all Probability, was an *Epilepſy*, or *Falling-Sickneſs*.

For, whereas it is ſaid of *David*, that *(s) he was ſtruck to the Heart* (for ſo it ſhould be render'd) *at the Words* which the Officers of *Achiſh* ſaid to their Maſter, and thereupon *was ſore afraid of the King*, leſt, at their Inſtigation, he ſhould put him to Death; nothing is known to cauſe an *Epilepſy* ſooner, * than a ſudden and violent Fright. Whereas it is ſaid in our Tranſlation, that *(t) he changed his Behaviour before them*; the Words in the *Hebrew* are, *his Taſte* (whereby ſome underſtand his Reaſon) *was chang'd*; but the *Septuagint* ſeem to have hit upon the right Senſe, ἠλλοίωσε τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτῦ, *his Viſage, or Countenance, was changed*; for every one knows what a ſudden Alteration a Fit of this Diſtemper occaſions in any one's Looks. Whereas it is ſaid in our Tranſlation, that he *feigned himſelf mad* in their Hands, the *Septuagint* render it, παρεφέρετο ἐν ταῖς Χερσίν αὐτῦ, *he trembled*, and was convuls'd in his Hands, as having no Power to direct their Motions, which is another known Effect of an Epilepſy. Whereas, again, our Tranſlation ſays, that *he ſcrabled*, or according to the marginal Note) made Marks *upon the Doors of the Gate*, the *Septuagint* render the Words, ἔπιπ[εν ἐπὶ τὰς θύρας τῆς πύλης, *he fell down againſt the Door of the Gate*, and the *Hebrew* Word *Tava* implies, *with ſuch Force and Violence*, as even to leave Marks or Prints upon them; ſo that he could not but bruiſe and hurt himſelf very much by theſe Falls. Nor is this all; for there is ſomething in the Words of *Achiſh*, (if we will but adhere to the Verſion of the *Septuagint*) that ſhews *David*'s Diſtemper to have been the *Falling-Sickneſs* beyond all Controverſy: For, whereas our Tranſlation is, *Lo, you ſee the Man is mad, wherefore then have you brought him to me? I have no need of Mad-Men*; the Words of the *Septuagint* are, ἰδὲ ἴδετε ἄνδρα ἐπίλεπ[ον, ἱνατὶ εἰσηγάγετε αὐτὸν πρὸς ἐμὲ; μὴ ἐλατ-ῆμαι ἐπιλήπ[ων ἐγὼ; *Why did ye bring this Man before me? Ye ſee that he is in an* Epilepſy, *and epileptick Men I do not want. Why then did you bring him, to be taken with a Fit in my Preſence?* Had *David*, all this while, been only *playing the Fool*, as our Tranſlation makes him, he might poſſibly have given *Achiſh* ſome Diverſion (as * Fools in great Houſes were often kept to give Diverſion) by his aukward or frantick Tricks; *(u)* but the Horror, wherewith the King was ſtruck at the firſt Sight of him, and his Indignation againſt his Officers, for bringing him into his Preſence, are enough to make one believe, that his Diſtemper had made him a *frightful* Object; and therefore the King commanded immediately to have him remov'd out of his Preſence, and out of the Palace.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Upon the whole, therefore, we may conclude, that, as *David* had the true Symptoms of an *Epilepſy* upon him, which, in

(*s*) 1 Sam. xxi. 12.

* The Author of the Book, which goes under the Name of *Hippocrates*, written profeſſedly upon this Subject, (περὶ Ἱέρης νόσυ) among many other Cauſes of this Diſtemper, makes mention of a ſudden Fright as one:

Ἐπικαταξέῃ δὲ ἐξ ἀδήλυ φόβυ γινομένυ.

(*t*) 1 Sam. xxi. 13.

* *Tarquin the Proud* kept *L. Junius Brutus* as a *Fool*, (for ſo he pretended to be) to divert his Children with his abſurd Diſcourſe and Actions. But *Anacharſis*, who liv'd about three hundred Years after *David*, complains of this Cuſtom among the *Grecians*, by telling us, that *a Man was a Creature too ſerious to be deſign'd for ſo ridiculous a Purpoſe*; and (to ſhew the Continuance of this Cuſtom) *Pliny*, writing to one of his Friends, who had complained to him, that, at a great Entertainment, he had paſs'd his Time but very diſagreeably, by reaſon of the *kept Fools*, who were always interrupting Converſation, tells him, that every one has his Taſte, but, as for himſelf, he could never be delighted with ſuch Extravagancies, tho' ſome Complaiſance was due to thoſe of another Way of Thinking. Epiſt. 17.

(*u*) *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 34. in Mr *Dumont*'s Letter.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

in all Probability, was occaſion'd by a violent Fright; God, in his good Providence, might permit this Diſtemper to befal him at this Juncture, in order to facilitate his Eſcape out of the Hands of *Achiſh*, and, as ſoon as the Danger was over, reſtor'd him to his former Health again. For this Reaſon we find him, in thoſe Pſalms, which he is thought to have compos'd upon this Occaſion, alluding both to the Nature of his Diſtemper, and to God's Goodneſs, in preſerving him in it, and delivering him from it: *(u) Great are the Troubles of the Righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of all: He keepeth all his Bones, ſo that not one of them is broken*; and therefore *(x) unto thee, O God, will I pay my Vows, unto thee will I give Thanks; for thou haſt delivered my Soul from Death, and my Feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the Light of the Living.*

David's *receiving thoſe that flock'd to him juſtify'd.*

DAVID, upon his Eſcape from the Court of *Achiſh*, not knowing of any other Place of Retreat, betook himſelf to the Cave of *Adullam*, where he found it neceſſary to provide for his Security, by putting himſelf upon ſome Foot of Defence. *Jonathan*, from full Conviction, had told him, (as himſelf, from frequent Experience, had found) that his Father, at all Adventures, would endeavour to take away his Life. His Family, by this Time, were fallen under the Diſpleaſure of *Saul*, and were in Danger of being all cut off (as lately were the Prieſts of *Nob*) under Pretence of a *Conſpiracy* againſt him; and therefore it is no Wonder, that his Brethren, having this Apprehenſion of Danger before their Eyes, reſorted to him for their own Security; no Wonder, that, in * Times of national Diſcord, Refugees of all Kinds, either through their private Wants, or the Oppreſſion of their Enemies, a Diſaffection to the Government, or a Zeal for the next Succeſſor, ſhould flock to *David*: Nor was *David* any ways blameable for receiving them, *(y)* ſince we have abundant Reaſon to preſume, that he took none under his Protection, but ſuch as were forc'd to flee from *Saul*'s Injuſtice and Oppreſſion, nor ſcreen'd any Debtors, but ſuch as were under a real Inability to ſatisfy their Creditors, and were therefore *neceſſitated*, either to leave their Country, or loſe their Liberty. The Submiſſion and Diſcipline, wherein he kept his People, and the high Notions of Reſpect and Reverence, which he always infus'd into them for the Government, and Perſon of the King, are an ample Teſtimony, that he meditated no Defection or Revolt; and the Debtors, whom he ſecur'd from cruel Proſecutions, or Slavery, he put in a Condition to pay their Creditors, by leading them againſt the Enemies of *Iſrael*, from whom, in ſeveral Expeditions, they return'd laden with rich Spoils.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

His Conduct in ſome Inſtances blam'd.

THERE is one Part, however, of *David*'s Conduct, that cannot ſo well be vindicated; and that is, what paſs'd between him and *Achiſh*, upon his ſecond Retreat to his Court. We may ſuppoſe indeed, that, during this Interval, an Alliance was made between *Achiſh* and him, (tho' the ſacred Hiſtorian makes no mention of it) and that this new *Ally*, hearing how violently *Saul* perſecuted him, might,

(*u*) Pſal. xxxiv. 17. (*x*) Ibid. lvi. 12, 13.

* Though there be no Compariſon between the Proceedings of a very righteous, and a very wicked Man, *David* and *Catiline*, yet it may not be amiſs, upon this Occaſion, to take Notice of what *Salluſt* ſays of *Manlius*, *Catiline*'s Agent and Ambaſſador. *Manlius in Eturia plebem ſollicitare, egeſtate, ſimul ac dolore injuriæ, novarum rerum cupidam, quod Sullæ dominatione agros, bonaque omnia amiſerat; preterea latrones cujuſque generis, quorum in eâ regione magna copia fuit*, &c. 'Tis not improbable however, that the Uſage now prevail'd among the *Jews*, which *Cæſar* tells us, anciently obtain'd among the *Gauls*, for thoſe, that were in Debt, oppreſs'd by Tributes, or the Tyranny of the *Great*, to betake themſelves to the Service of ſome *eminent* Man for Protection: By him they were maintain'd, and to him they devoted themſelves, under a ſolemn Obligation to live and die with him. Theſe were called, in the *Gallic* Language, *Soldurii*, from whence the Word *Soldier* is deriv'd; and, as they might be honeſt and good Men, tho' they had the Misfortune to be in Debt, or could not ſubmit to tyrannical Treatment; ſo, in all Probability, *David*'s Companions were. Vid. *The Life of* David, *by the Author of Revelation examin'd.*

(*y*) *Calmet*'s Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xxii. 2.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

might, in Hopes of making the Breach wider, and of exaſperating *David* againſt him, voluntarily invite him into his Dominions; but certainly we cannot but ſay, that *David* ſhould by no Means have gone. God had expreſsly commanded him by his Prophet to return into the Tribe of *Judah*, and, at the ſame Time, gave him Aſſurance, that he would be his Safeguard and Protector: It was therefore an apparent Diffidence of God's Providence, which had been ſo long employ'd in his Preſervation, to make an Enemy's Country the Place of his Refuge; and a Breach it was of Truth and Fidelity to his new Ally, to make him believe, that he was fighting againſt his *Foes*, when all the while he was deſtroying his *Confederates*.

BUT what can we ſay for his Conduct, when he joins Forces with the Enemies of his Country, takes the Field with them, promiſes to act *offenſively*, and looks upon it as a Kind of Slight and Indignity to be diſmiſs'd? *(a) What have I done*, ſays he to *Achiſh*, *that I may not go fight againſt the Enemies of my Lord the King?* One would really ſuſpect, by his aſking the Queſtion, that he had an Intention not unlike that of the famous *Martius Coriolanus*, who, to revenge himſelf of the Ingratitude of his Country, join'd with the *Volſci* to deſtroy it. But if his Intention was either to ſtand *neuter*, or to turn againſt the *Philiſtines* in the Day of Battle, his Perfidy and Ingratitude to *Achiſh* muſt be open and conſpicuous.

IN ſhort, how well ſoever we may wiſh to *David*'s Character, there is no vindicating his Conduct in this Particular. Which Party ſoever he had taken, he muſt have been culpable; and one Party he muſt have taken, had not Providence ſo timely interpos'd to preſerve his Honour without injuring his Conſcience. However, if we would ſuppoſe any Thing in Extenuation of his Fault, we muſt repreſent to ourſelves a *Fugitive*, purſu'd by a formidable Enemy, and, every Moment, in Danger of falling into his Hands; this Fugitive kindly receiv'd at a *foreign* Court, and protected by a Prince, that was in Hoſtility with his Perſecutor; this Prince expecting of his Refugee, in Conſideration of the Favours, he had conferr'd on him, that he ſhould attend him to the War, and eſpouſe his Cauſe againſt their common Enemy; and, all this while, the other, bound in Gratitude not to be *uncivil*, and, conſidering the dangerous Situation of his own Affairs, not daring to diſcover his real Purpoſes: If we imagine this, I ſay, we muſt allow, that, if in any Caſe, what they call a *Fineſſe* in Policy were allowable, it was in this of *David*'s, when he had unhappily brought himſelf into theſe Circumſtances.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

IT may ſeem a little ſtrange perhaps, that *David*, who, in theſe, and ſeveral other groſſer Inſtances, could not but be culpable in the Eyes of God, ſhould, nevertheleſs, be ſtil'd in Scripture *(b) the Man after his own Heart:* But, whoever obſerves the Occaſion of that Expreſſion, will find, that it ought to be taken in a *comparative* Senſe only, and in Derogation indeed to *Saul*, whoſe Tranſgreſſion, in ſparing *Amalek*, the Prophet *Samuel* was then reproving; that, in executing his Decrees upon the *idolatrous* Nations round about him, *David* would be more punctual, and not ſo remiſs as *Saul* had been; and, in this Reſpect, would conform to the divine Will, or be *the Man after God's own Heart*. This ſeems to be the primary Senſe of the Words, tho' the common *Solution*, *viz.* that, tho' *David* was a great and grievous Sinner, yet the Severity of his Repentance clear'd him in the Sight of God, and made an Amends for the Enormity of his Tranſgreſſions, be not much amiſs.

And yet in what Senſe he was a Man after God's own Heart.

IT cannot however with Juſtice be ſaid, that *David* was any ways culpable in ſparing the Life of *Saul*, even when Providence ſeems to have put it in his Hand. This Trial God made of his Virtue and Clemency, and a glorious Conqueſt it was, not only to overcome his own

His ſaving Saul's Life juſtify'd.

(a) 1 Sam. xxix. 8. (b) Ibid. xiii. 14. and xv. 24.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116 &c.

own Reſentments, which were juſtly enough founded againſt *Saul*, but the Arguments and Inſtigations likewiſe of thoſe about him; *(b) Behold the Day, of which the Lord ſaid unto thee, Behold I will deliver thine Enemy into thine Hand, that thou mayeſt do to him, as it ſhall ſeem good unto thee.* God had deliver'd him into his Hand indeed, but had given him no Order, or Permiſſion to ſlay *Saul*. *(c)* He had promis'd him the Kingdom likewiſe, but would, by no means, allow him to aſcend the Throne by Blood. His Title to the Succeſſion was real, and inconteſtable, but not allow'd to be put in Force, or himſelf to attempt, by Ways of Violence, the Poſſeſſion of the Crown, as long as *Saul* was permitted by God to reign, and recogniz'd as *Sovereign*, by the People. *David* as yet, being only a private Man, had no Authority to wage War againſt *Saul*; and, tho' it be allowable for any one to defend himſelf againſt an unjuſt Aggreſſor, and to repel Force by Force, yet this muſt be done only in order to ſecure his own Life, and not to take away that of his Adverſary; for what the Apoſtles ſay of *judging*, or cenſuring, is much more forcible in the Matter of *killing*; *(d) Who art thou that judgeſt another Man's Servant? To his own Maſter he ſtandeth or falleth; for there is one Lawgiver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy: Who art thou then that judgeſt another?* And theſe Rules, which ought to be obſerv'd by private Perſons, are much more extenſive, when they relate to a Prince and his Subject. The *Subject* is oblig'd in Duty, even tho' he be innocent, to bear patiently the ill Treatment of his Prince. *David*, no Doubt, was conſcious of his own Integrity, but, were it not for the preceding Promiſes of God in his Favour, and the Orders, which, from Time to Time, he receiv'd from the High-Prieſt's Oracle, it would not be ſo eaſy a Matter to juſtify ſome Part of his Conduct. His fleeing from his Country, inliſting Men, and putting himſelf in a Condition of Defence, would, even under our *mild* Government, be look'd upon as *ſeditious* and *rebellious* Proceedings: And there we may ſuppoſe, that *David* himſelf might not have ſo favourable an Opinion of the Courſe of Life, he was compell'd at that Time to follow; might think that he gave ſome Umbrage to *Saul*'s Jealouſy, and Suſpicion of him; and might thereupon be the more inclinable to excuſe the Violence of his Perſecution, and to make no other Uſe of the Advantages, he had againſt him, than to demonſtrate his own Innocence, and the Groundleſſneſs of the other's Suſpicions; for ſuch ſeems to be the Senſe of his own Words. *(e) Wherefore doth my Lord thus purſue after his Servant? For, what have I done, or what Evil is in my Hand? Wherefore heareſt thou Mens Words, ſaying,* David *ſeeketh thy Hurt? Behold this Day thine Eyes have ſeen, how the Lord had delivered thee into mine Hand in the Cave, but mine Eye ſpared thee*; therefore *curſed be they before the Lord*, who make this Difference betwixt us; *for they have driven me out this Day from abiding in the Inheritance of the Lord:* For herein, he not only pleads his own Innocence, and good Intentions towards the King, but, in ſome Meaſure, excuſes the King's Conduct towards him, as being under the Influence of *evil Counſellors*, which both impos'd upon the King's Credulity, and compell'd him to ſuch a Method of Life, as was far from being agreeable to his Intereſt or Inclination.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

UPON many Accounts therefore, it was an Act of his great and generous Soul, for *David* to ſpare the Life of his ſevereſt Enemy: But tho' we cannot, in like Manner, juſtify his Indignation againſt *Nabal*, and the Oath which he ſwore to deſtroy his whole Family; yet ſomething may be offer'd in excuſe of it, if we attend a little to what occaſion'd it, and the too common Effect, which ſuch Treatment

And his Reſentment againſt Nabal, *in ſome Meaſure, excus'd.*

(b) 1 Sam. xxiv. 4. (c) *Calmet*'s Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 4. (d) Rom. xiv. 4. and Jam. iv. 12.
(e) 1 Sam. xxiv. 9, 10.

A. M. 2838, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

ment (as *Nabal*'s was) is apt to have upon ſuch Spirits, as we may ſuppoſe *David*'s to have been. *David*, while he continu'd in the Wilderneſs of *Paran*, had given his Men Charge, not only to do no Injury to *Nabal*'s Shepherds and Herdſmen, but even to protect and aſſiſt them, in caſe they were invaded by any of the neighbouring *Arabians*; and now, that their Maſter was ſhearing his Sheep (which was always a *feſtival* Seaſon) not far from the Place, where *David* was encamp'd; to ſhew him the greater Reſpect, he ſent no leſs than *ten young Men* of his Company, to make his Compliments to him, and, in the moſt civil Manner, to requeſt ſomething of him, (as it was the Cuſtom to be generous and liberal at ſuch a Time as that) for the Relief of himſelf and his Followers, in this Form: *(f) Peace be to thee*, (as the young Mens Inſtructions were) *and Peace be to thine Houſe, and Peace be unto all thou haſt. Peace*, in the ſacred Language, comprehends all Manner of Bleſſings, both *ſpiritual* and *temporal*, and therefore an higher Compliment, (as we ſay) or a more affectionate Salutation, could not have been deviſ'd. *And now I have heard, that thou haſt Shearers; and thy Shepherds, which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought miſſing unto them, all the while that they were in* Carmel: A ſufficient Argument, one would think, to engage *Nabal*'s grateful Acknowledgment; becauſe it certainly was a Matter of no ſmall Courteſy, for a Body of Men in Arms, and in Want of the common Neceſſaries of Life, not to take by Violence what they could not be hinder'd from. Such Men claim a Kind of Licence to do Injuries with Impunity, and therefore it ought to be deem'd a great Favour, when they do them not. *David*, and his Men however, are ſo far from magnifying their Services to *Nabal*, that they only ſay, *(g) they did them no Hurt*; whereas his own Servants acknowledge, *that they were a* Defence, *and a Wall to them, both by Night and by Day, all the while, that they were with them keeping Sheep.* Upon this Preſumption, the Matter of their Requeſt was, *Let the young Men find Favour in thine Eyes; (for we come in a good Day) give, I pray thee, whatſoever cometh unto thine Hand unto thy Servants, and thy Son* David. Words can hardly be invented more full of Reſpect and Humility; *(h)* for he pays a Deference to *Nabal*, either upon the Account of his *Seniority*, or Deſcent from the ſame *Tribe*, and deſires no Rarities, no *Delicates*, but any Thing that firſt came to hand, and what he could moſt conveniently ſpare. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

NABAL (as we juſt now hinted) was of the ſame Tribe with *David*, and could not therefore be ſuppoſed ignorant either of his Exploits, in Defence of his Country, nor of the true Cauſe of *Saul*'s Indignation againſt him: And yet, obſerve the Rudeneſs and Inſolence of his Anſwer to ſuch a Civil Meſſage, and humble Requeſt: *(i) Who is* David, *and who is the Son of* Jeſſe? *There are many Servants, now-a-days, that break every Man from his Maſter. Shall I* take the Proviſions I have made *for my Shearers*, and *give them unto Men, whom I know not whence they are?* Nothing certainly could be more provoking than ſuch an Anſwer as this. The charging *David* with being a *Vagabond*, and Rebel to his Prince, was a Reproach inſufferable to a Man of a liberal Spirit, who knew himſelf innocent: And therefore no Wonder that *David*, upon the Report of the Meſſengers, who were themſelves brought under the ſame *Predicament*, and therefore had no Reaſon to alleviate Matters, was reſolved, in his Paſſion, to be reveng'd upon *Nabal*. For, *(k)* there were four Things in the Matter before us, that ſeem to have inflam'd his Reſentment, and put him upon this ſanguinary Deſign. 1ſt, The *Want*, which both he and his Companions at preſent labour'd under, but

(f) 1 Sam. xxv. 6, &c. *(g)* Ibid. ver. 16. *(h)* *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries. *(i)* 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. *(k)* *Le Clerc*'s Comment. in Locum.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

but hop'd, to have reliev'd, out of the Abundance of a *wealthy* Man, who might eaſily have done it without hurting himſelf. 2dly, The *Deception* he was under in finding no Compenſation made him, for the Care, which he, and his People had taken of *Nabal*'s Cattle, tho' perhaps he had given them his Word and Aſſurance, that ſomething of this Kind would be done. 3dly, The *Reſentment*, which eaſily riſes in the Breaſt of any generous Man, when, inſtead of Thanks, and a grateful Acknowledgment, he meets with Contumely and opprobrious Language. And 4thly, The *Vexation*, which an innocent Man, conſcious of his own Merits, and the Services he had done his King and Country, muſt neceſſarily feel, when he perceives himſelf vilified, and treated as a *Scoundrel*. † *Fugitive* and *Slave* are Imputations of the groſſeſt Nature; and, when retorted by an ungrateful Perſon upon his Guardian and Benefactor, are Provocations paſt bearing.

ANY one of theſe Things ſingly was enough to irritate a Man of a lofty Spirit; but all put together could hardly fail of inflaming the Mind to ſuch a Degree, as to make him loſe the Government of his Paſſion, and fall into the moſt vindictive Rage, which is generally more obſervable in *military* Men, whoſe Courage and Spirits run high, and, being too much accuſtom'd to Blood and Slaughter, even in lawful Wars, have not that Dread and Abhorrence of cruel and outrageous Executions, as the reſt of Mankind have, who live more retired and peaceable Lives.

'TWAS to the ſudden Tranſport of *David*'s Paſſion then, and perhaps *that* exaſperated by the Inſtigations of his own Men, that we are to impute his Vow, and Deſign of deſtroying *Nabal*'s Family: And tho' in this we cannot commend him, yet certainly there is ſomething *Praiſe-worthy* in his ſpeedy Reconciliation, upon *Abigail*'s firſt Addreſs, and Application to him, in the Room of her Huſband: *(l) Bleſſed be the Lord God of* Iſrael, *which ſent thee this Day to meet me; and bleſſed be thy Advice, and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this Day from coming to ſhed Blood, and from avenging myſelf with my own Hand.* † "In a Word, the Reſolution againſt *Nabal* "(as one elegantly expreſſes it) was the "Reſolution of a *mortal*, not to ſay a *mi*- "*litary* Man, too much injur'd and pro- "vok'd, and urg'd by Neceſſity and Self- "preſervation: The Change and the "Thankſgiving, upon being averted from "Evil, were the Sentiments of an *Hero*, "and a Saint."

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

THE *Jews* indeed (as we quoted the Objection from *Joſephus*) give us an high Commendation of *Saul*, and ſeem to prefer him before *David* himſelf in Regard to the *Magnanimity* of his Death. But it it is much to be queſtioned, whether *Self-murther* (which was certainly *Saul*'s Caſe) be an Act of Magnanimity, or not. For, beſides that the Laws of all Nations have condemned it, as abhorrent to the Dictates of Nature and Reaſon, of Self-love and Self-preſervation; the wiſeſt of the *Heathen* World ever look'd upon it as an Inſtance of Madneſs and Brutality, and, with great Wiſdom, have concluded, that ſuch an Action is ſo far from ſavouring of true Courage and Generoſity, that * it is the ſure Effect of a weak and puſillanimous Temper of Mind; ſince true *Greatneſs of Soul* (as they juſtly argue) conſiſts in ſupporting the Evils of Adverſity, and not in ſhifting

Saul's *killing himſelf blam'd, as an Act of Cowardice.*

† The Life of King *David.* (l) 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33. † The Life of King *David.*

* Si rationem rectè conſulas, non vera animi magnitudo nominatur, ubi quiſque, non valendo tolerare vel quæque aſpera, vel aliena peccata, ſeipſum interemerit: Magis enim mens infirma deprehenditur, quæ ferre non poteſt vel duram ſui corporis ſervitutem, vel ſtultam vulgi opinionem; majorque animus meritò dicendus, qui vitam ærumnoſam magis poteſt ferre, quam fugere. Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. i. c. 22. And to the ſame Purpoſe is that in an Heathen Author:

Rebus in auguſtis facile eſt contemnere vitam:
Fortiter ille facit, qui miſer eſſe poteſt. MART. Epig.

A. M 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

ſhifting them off, which is a Mark of a poor impatient Spirit, ſinking under the common Calamities of Life, and not knowing how to bear the Blows of bad Fortune. *(m) Draw thy Sword, and thruſt me through therewith, leſt the Uncircumciſed come and mock, or abuſe me,* * was the Requeſt, which *Saul* made to his *Armour-bearer*, and ſhews that it was not Bravery and Courage, but the Fear of *Inſults*, and a conſcious *Inability* to bear them with a becoming *Superiority* of Mind, that made him ſhun the *Storm*, when he ſaw it approaching, by withdrawing from the Stage of Life.

As a Violation of God's Law.

SAUL's Caſe indeed was very dolorous, but he had not therefore any Authority to deſtroy himſelf. His Life was a ſacred Depoſitum of God's, and not to be taken away without invading his Right, and violating his Laws at the ſame Time. For, whatever ſome may think of the *Silence* of the Scripture concerning Self-murther, there is no Queſtion to be made, but that it is included in the *ſixth Commandment*, under which *Saul* then lived. *(n)* The Commandment forbids Murther in general; and 'tis certainly as much Murther, to kill ourſelves, as to kill another Man: And the Reaſon, which the Scripture gives, why we are not allowed to do it, in both Caſes, is the ſame, becauſe *(o) in the Image of God made he Man.* For if I muſt not ſhed the Blood of another, becauſe *he is made in the Image of God*; I muſt not ſhed the Blood of mine own ſelf, becauſe I alſo am a Man, and *made in the Image of God*, as well as he. The Reaſon therefore why we have not more frequent Prohibitions againſt this Sin is plainly this, —— *(p)* That whatever Sins or Offences God, as a Lawgiver, prohibits, he prohibits with a Penalty, *i. e.* he affixes ſuch a Puniſhment to ſuch a Crime, and he, who commits the Crime, is to undergo the Puniſhment in this World, whether it be Reſtitution, Loſs of Limb, or Loſs of Life itſelf. But now this can never happen in the Caſe of Self-murther, becauſe Self-murther prevents all Puniſhment, (the Man being dead, before any Cognizance can be taken of his Offence) and therefore prevents all Laws concerning it; and can, conſequently, only be included under general Commands, and forbidden as a Sin, whereof God alone can take Cognizance in the World to come.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

And whether he was properly ſav'd, or no.

SINCE upon the whole then, *Saul* may be ſaid to have died in an Act of Cowardice, and in the Violation of God's Law, whereof he had no Space to repent; it has been a Matter of ſome Enquiry, what we are to think of his Salvation. The Scripture indeed tells us, that *(q) Saul died for his Tranſgreſſion, which he committed againſt the Lord, and alſo for aſking Counſel of one who had a familiar Spirit, to enquire of it, and enquired not of the Lord, and therefore the Lord ſlew him:* But it is doing a manifeſt Violence to the Senſe of theſe Words, to apply them (as ſome have done) to his *final* Perdition, when they plainly relate to no more than his *temporal* Death. The dangerous and deſtructive Nature of *Self-murther* is, that it makes Repentance (the only revealed Condition of Man's Salvation) impoſſible; but then we are to know, that, in that inexhauſtible Fountain of Goodneſs, there may be ſome *uncovenanted* Mercy, ſome *ſovereign* and *prerogative* Grace, that may make favourable Allowances for the Diſtraction of Mens Thoughts or Paſſions, the Violence of their Fears or Troubles, or the over-bearing Weight of any other Temptation.

BUT (to determine this Queſtion more peremptorily) tho' it certainly be conſonant to the Mercy and Goodneſs of God, to

(m) 1 Sam. xxxi. 4.

* How much nobler was that Reſolution of *Darius*, who, finding himſelf betray'd, and that he was either to be murther'd by his own Subjects, or deliver'd into the Hands of *Alexander*, would not however be his own Executioner. *I had rather*, ſays he, *die by another's Guilt, than my own.* CURT. Lib. v. c. 12.

(n) *Fleetwood*, againſt Self-murther. (o) Gen. ix. 6. (p) *Fleetwood*, ibid. (q) 1 Chron. x. 13, 14.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1116, &c.

to think, that no Man ſhall anſwer for any Miſcarriage, which is wholly occaſion'd by the Power of a *Diſeaſe*, or the Diſtraction of the *Brain*, becauſe whatever is committed in ſuch a Caſe, is not the Man's *free Act*, and conſequently, cannot be his Guilt; yet we have no Reaſon to preſume, that the Caſe is not ſo with thoſe, who, out of Pride, or Haughtineſs, Fear of Miſeries to come, or Impatience under preſent Sufferings, diſtruſt of God's Providence, or deſpair of his Mercy, lay violent Hands upon themſelves; becauſe the Act was both voluntary and vicious, and not to be amended by Repentance: But, without limiting thy Goodneſs, *O Lord*, unto thy Mercy we commit their Souls!

Heathen Teſtimonies in Confirmation of ſome Paſſages.

THUS we have endeavour'd to ſatisfy moſt of the *popular* Objections, which have been raiſed againſt ſeveral Facts, occurring in the firſt Book of *Samuel*; and, for the farther Confirmation hereof, we ſhall only inſtance in one or two ancient *Traditions* among the *Heathens*, which, in all Probability, deriv'd their Original from this Part of ſacred Hiſtory. The *Scythians*, upon their Return out of *Egypt*, paſſing thro' the Country of the *Philiſtines*, robb'd the Temple of *Venus* at *Aſkalon*, and for their Puniſhment (as *(r)* *Herodotus* tells us) they, and their Poſterity, were, for a long while after, afflicted with Emerods: Whereupon *(s)* the learned *Prideaux* remarks, that the *Philiſtines* had till then preſerv'd the Memory of what they had formerly ſuffer'd on Account of the Ark of God. The *Athenians*, when the Myſteries of *Bacchus* were brought out of *Bœtia*, having not receiv'd them with all the Pomp and Solemnity that the God expected, were ſmitten *(t)* with a Diſeaſe in their *ſecret Parts*, which reſembl'd the Malady of the People of *Aſhdod*, and ſo did their Cure too; for, having conſulted the *Oracle*, they were inform'd, that the Way to get rid of their Plague, was to offer unto *Bacchus* golden Figures of the Part, wherein they were afflicted. The *Grecians*, at the taking of *Troy*, diſcover'd an Ark dedicated to *Bacchus*, and when *Eurypilus* (as *Pauſanias (u)* tells us) adventur'd to open it, he found therein the Image of the God, but was immediately depriv'd of his Senſes for daring to look into it; which ſeems to be a plain Tranſcript from the Irreverence and Fate of the *Bethſhemites*. *(x)* *Clemens Alexandrinus* has obſerv'd, that the Fable of *Æacus*'s praying for Rain in a great Drought, and when *Greece* was ſadly diſtreſs'd for Want of Corn, was borrow'd from that Part of *Samuel*'s Hiſtory, where he is ſaid to have call'd down Thunder and Rain, in the Time of *Wheat-Harveſt*, when the Sky was all ſerene and clear: And therefore we need leſs wonder at the Story between *Saul* and the Witch of *Endor*, when we read of *Circe*, *Medea*, *Erichtho*, *Manto*, *Antonoë*, and ſeveral other Women, who, in the *Heathen* World, became famous for their *Necromancy*, and of the many Votaries, that reſorted to them; when we find *Statius* introducing *Tireſias*, as raiſing Altars, making Libations, and offering Sacrifices, * with ſolemn Invocations to the *infernal* Gods; and *Homer* himſelf ſpending a great Part of *(y)* one Book of his Poem, in repreſenting *Ulyſſes* as invocating the Ghoſt of this ſame *Tireſias*, and attending to the Oracles, which proceeded from his Mouth. Theſe Things had their Foundation in ſome early *Traditions*, which at firſt aroſe from the Facts contain'd in the *ſacred*

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

(r) Lib. i. (s) Connection of the Old and New Teſtament, Part i. Book 1. page 44. (t) Vide *Ariſtoph.* Scholiaſt. in Acharn. Act II. (u) In Achaic. c. 19. pag. 572. (x) Stromat. 6.

* The Words of his Invocation are theſe:

Solvite pulſanti loca muta, & inane ſeveræ
Perſephones, vulguſque cava ſub nocte repoſtum
Elicite, & plena redeat Styga Portitor alno;
Forte ſimul greſſus, &c.

(y) Odyſſ. xi.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

Writings, which are confeſſedly the moſt ancient Records we have; and, in this Reſpect, are an Argument of their *Veracity*, ſince we find them alluded to, by ſubſequent Authors, who had no Regard to their Authority. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

DISSERTATION III.

Of SAMUEL's *Appearing to* SAUL *at the Witch of* ENDOR's.

An Account of the Beginning of Necromancy.

HOW long the Profeſſion of *Necromancy*, or the Art of raiſing up the Dead, in order to pry into future Events, or to be inform'd of the Fate of the *Living*, has obtain'd in the World, we have no Indications from Hiſtory. We perceive no Footſteps of it in the Ages before the *Flood*, and yet it is ſtrange, that a People, abandon'd to all Kind of Wickedneſs in a Manner, could keep themſelves clear of this: But our Account of theſe Times is very ſhort. The firſt expreſs Mention that we meet with of *Magicians* and *Sorcerers*, is almoſt in the Beginning of the Book of *Exodus*, where *Moſes* is ſolliciting the Deliverance of the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*; and therefore *Egypt*, which affected to be the Mother of moſt *occult* Sciences, is ſuppoſs'd to have been the Inventreſs of this. From *Egypt* it ſpread itſelf into the neighbouring Countries, and ſoon infected all the *Eaſt*: For, as it undertook to gratify Man's Inquiſitiveneſs, and *ſuperſtitious* Curioſity, it could not long want Abettors. From *Egypt* 'tis certain that the *Iſraelites* brought along with them no ſmall Inclination to theſe deteſtable Practices, and were but two much addicted to them; notwithſtanding all the Care that the *State* had taken to ſuppreſs them, and the Proviſion which God had made, by eſtabliſhing a Method of conſulting him, to prevent their hankering after them.

The Jewiſh *Laws againſt it.*

THE Injunction of the Law is very expreſs. —— *(z) When thou art come into the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou ſhalt not learn to do after the Abominations of thoſe Nations. There ſhall not be found among you any, that uſeth Divination, or an Obſerver of Times, or an Enchanter, or a Witch, or a Charmer, or a * Conſulter with familiar Spirits, or a Wizard, or a Necromancer; for all that do*

(z) Deut. xviii. 9, &c.

* What our *Engliſh* Tranſlation makes a *familiar Spirit*, the *Septuagint* and *Vulgate* render *the Spirit of Python*, but the *Hebrew* call it the *Spirit of Ob*. The Word *Ob*, or *Oboth*, in its primary Signification, is a *Bottle*, or Veſſel of Leather, wherein Liquors were put; and 'tis not unlikely that this Name was given to *Witches* and *Wizards*, becauſe, when they were in their Fits of *Enthuſiaſm*, they ſwelled in their Bellies like a Bottle. The Occaſion of this Swelling is ſaid by ſome to proceed from a *Demon*'s entering into the Sorcereſs *per Partes Genitales*, and ſo aſcending to the Bottom of her Stomach, from whence, at that Time, ſhe utter'd her Predictions; and for this Reaſon the *Latins* call ſuch Perſons *Ventriloqui*, and the *Greeks* Ἐγγαστρίμυθοι, i. e. *People who ſpeak out of their Bellies*. That there have been ſuch People as theſe might be ſhewn by ſeveral Examples both in antient and modern Hiſtory; but, at preſent, we ſhall content ourſelves with one, taken from *Cælius Rhodiginus*, (Lection. Antiq. lib. viii. c. 10.) His Words are to this Effect: —— "While I am writing, *ſays he*, concerning *ventriloquous* Perſons, there is, in my own Country, "a Woman of a mean Extract, who has an unclean Spirit in her Belly, from whence may be heard a Voice, not very "ſtrong indeed, but very articulate and intelligible. Multitudes of People have heard this Voice, as well as myſelf, "and all imaginable Precaution has been us'd in examining into the Truth of this Fact. *Quando futuri avida portentus "Mens, ſæpe accerſitam Ventriloquam, ac exutam amictu, nequid fraudis occultaret, inſpectare & audire concupivit.* This "*Demon* (as our Author adds) is called *Cincinnatulus*, and when the Woman calls upon him by his Name, he imme-"diately anſwers her." In like Manner ſeveral ancient Writers have inform'd us, that, in the Times of *Paganiſm*, evil Spirits had Communion with theſe *ventriloquæ per partes ſecretiores*; but, at preſent, we ſhall only take Notice of a remarkable Paſſage in St *Chryſoſtom*, which we chuſe to give the Reader in *Latin*. *Traditur Pythia Fœmina fuiſſe, quæ in Tripodes ſedens expanſa malignum ſpiritum per interna immiſſum, & per Genitales partes ſubeuntem excipiens, Furore repleretur, ipſaque reſolutis Crinibus baccharetur, ex ore ſpumam emittens, & ſic Furoris verba loquebatur*, &c. *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 36.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

do theſe Things are an Abomination to the Lord: And therefore their Puniſhment was this: —— (*a*) *A Man, or a Woman, that hath a familiar Spirit, or that is a Wizard, ſhall ſurely be put to Death. They ſhall ſtone them with Stones, their Blood ſhall be upon them.* Nor was it only the Practiſers of ſuch vile Arts, but thoſe likewiſe, that reſorted to them upon any Occaſion, were liable to the ſame Puniſhment; for (*b*) *the Soul that turneth after ſuch as have familiar Spirits, and after Wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even ſet my Face againſt that Soul, and will cut him off from among his People,* ſaith the Lord.

SUCH was the Severity of the *Jewiſh* Laws againſt thoſe, who either practis'd, or encourag'd any Manner of *magical* Arts; and it muſt be ſaid in *Saul*'s Commendation, that he had put the Laws in Execution againſt ſuch vile People, he had deſtroy'd, and drove away (*c*) *thoſe, that had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards out of the Land*; and yet, (obſerve the Weakneſs, as well as the Wickedneſs of the Man!) when himſelf fell into Diſtreſs, and had abundant Reaſon to believe that God had forſaken him, he flees to one of theſe *Creatures* for Relief, and requeſts of her to raiſe up his old Friend *Samuel*, as expecting very probably ſome Advice from him: But, whether this was really done or no, or, if done, in what Manner it was effected, are Points that have ſo much exercis'd the Heads and Pens, both of *antient* and *modern*, both of *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Writers, that little or nothing *new* can be ſaid upon them; and therefore all, that I ſhall endeavour to do, will be to reduce their ſeveral Sentiments into as narrow a Compaſs, and to ſtate them in as fair a Light, as I can, by enquiring into theſe three Particulars.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

1. WHETHER there was a real Apparition.

2. WHAT this Apparition (if *real*) was; and,

3. BY what Means, and for what Purpoſes, it was effected.

The Arguments of thoſe, who take the Whole for a Cheat *of the Witch.*

1. IT cannot be deny'd indeed, but that thoſe, who explode the Reality of the Apparition, and make it to be all nothing but a *Cheat* and *Juggle* of the *Sorcereſs*, have found out ſome Arguments, that, at firſt Sight, make a tolerable Appearance. They tell us, (*d*) that the ſacred Hiſtory never once makes mention of *Saul*'s ſeeing *Samuel* with his own Eyes. It informs us indeed, that *Saul* knew him by the Deſcription, which the Woman gave, and that he held, for ſome conſiderable Time, a Converſation with him; but ſince it is no where ſaid that he *really* ſaw him, "Why might not the Woman counter-"feit a Voice, and pretend it was *Sa-*"*muel*'s? When *Saul* aſk'd her to * raiſe "him up *Samuel*, i. e. to diſturb the "Ghoſt

(*a*) Levit. xx. 27. (*b*) Ibid. ver. 6. (*c*) 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. (*d*) *Scot* and *Webſter* upon Witchcraft.

* What Forms of Inchantment were anciently us'd in the Practice of *Necromancy*, we are at a Loſs to know, becauſe we read of none, that the *Pythoneſs* of *Endor* employ'd; but this might probably happen, becauſe the Ghoſt of *Samuel* came upon her ſooner than ſhe expected, and before ſhe had begun her Incantations. That however there were ſeveral Rites, Spells, and Invocations us'd upon theſe Occaſions, we may learn from almoſt every antient Author; but from none more particularly than from *Lucan*, who brings in *Erictho* animating a dead Body, in order to tell young *Pompey* the Fate of the Civil War. The Ceremonies, ſhe uſes for this Purpoſe, are thus deſcrib'd in our excellent Tranſlator of that Poet.

This ſaid: She runs the mangled Carcaſe o'er,
And wipes from ev'ry Wound the cruſty Gore;
Now with hot Blood the frozen Breaſt ſhe warms,
And with ſtrong Lunar Dews confirms her Charms.
Anon ſhe mingles ev'ry monſtrous Birth,
Which Nature, wayward and perverſe, brings forth.
Nor, Entrails of the ſpotted *Lynx* ſhe lacks,
Nor bony Joints from fell *Hyæna*'s Backs;
Nor *Deers* hot Marrow, rich with ſnaky Blood,
Nor Foam of raging *Dogs*, that fly the Flood.
Her Store the tardy *Remora* ſupplies,
With Stones from *Eagles* warm, and *Dragons* Eyes;
Snakes, that on Pinions cut their airy Way,
And nimbly o'er *Arabian* Deſerts prey. &c.
To theſe ſhe joins dire Drugs without a Name,
A thouſand Poiſons never known to Fame;
Herbs, o'er whoſe Leaves the *Hag* her Spells had ſung,
And wet with curſed *Spittle*, as they ſprung.
With every other Miſchief moſt abhorr'd,
Which Hell, or worſe *Erictho* could afford.

A. M. 2878, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1110, &c.

" Ghoſt of ſo great a Prophet, ſhe might " think he was no common Man; and " when *(e) he ſware unto her by the Lord*, " that he would defend her from all Dan- " ger, he gave her Intimation enough " that he was the *King*. *(f)* The crafty " Woman therefore, having picked up " the Knowledge of this, might retire " into her Cloſet or Cell, and there, " having her *Familiar*, i. e. ſome cunning " artful Man, to make proper *Reſponſes*, " in a different Voice, might eaſily impoſe " upon one, who was diſtracted with " anxious Thoughts, and had already " ſhewn ſufficient *Credulity*, in thinking " there was any Efficacy in *magical* Ope- " rations to evocate the Dead.

" The Controverſy between *Saul* and " *David* every one knew; nor was it " now become a Secret, that the Crown " was to devolve upon the *latter*: And " therefore that Part of the Diſcourſe, " which paſs'd between *Saul* and *Samuel*, " any Man of a common Genius might " have hit off, without much Difficulty. " *Endor* was not ſo far diſtant from *Gilboa* " or *Shunem*, but that the Condition of " the two Armies might eaſily be known, " and that the *Philiſtines* were ſuperior " both in Courage and Numbers; and " therefore his *Reſpondent*, without all " Peradventure, might prognoſticate *Saul*'s " Defeat; and, tho' there was ſome Ha- " zard in the laſt Conjecture, *viz.* that " he and his Sons would die in Battle; yet " there was this Advantage on the Side of " the *Gueſs*, that they were all Men of " known and experienc'd Valour, who would rather ſacrifice their Lives, than " turn their Backs upon their Enemies." From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Upon the whole therefore, the Maintainers of this *Hypotheſis* conclude, that, as there is no Reaſon, ſo there was no Neceſſity for any *miraculous* Interpoſition in this Affair, ſince this is no more, than what any common *Gipſy*, with another in Confederacy to aſſiſt her, might do to any *credulous* Perſon, who came to conſult her.

Anſwer'd by others.

They, who undertake to oppoſe this Opinion, lay it down for a good Rule, in the Interpretation of Scripture, —— That we ſhould, as far as we can, adhere to the *primary* Senſe of the Words, and never have Recourſe to any *foreign*, or *ſingular* Explication, but where the *literal* is inconſiſtent either with the *Dictates* of right Reaſon, or the *Analogy* of *Faith*. Let any indifferent Perſon then, *ſay they*, take into his Hand the Account of *Saul*'s conſulting this *Sorcereſs*, and, upon the firſt reading it, he muſt confeſs, that the Notion, which it conveys to his Mind, is that of a *real Apparition*; and ſince the Paſſages, that both precede and follow it, are *confeſſedly* to be taken in their moſt obvious Meaning, why ſhould a ſtrange and forc'd Conſtruction be put upon this? *(g)* Have we not as much Reaſon to entertain a good Opinion of the Author of this Hiſtory, his Ability, his Integrity, his Knowledge of what he wrote about, and his undeſigning to deceive us, as we can have of any *Critick* or *Commentator* upon it; and therefore, when he gives us to underſtand that the Woman *ſaw Samuel*, upon what Preſumption are we led to diſbelieve it? *Saul* and his Companions might

Having thus prepar'd the Body, ſhe makes her Invocation in theſe Words:

Ye Furies! and thou black, accurſed Hell!
Ye Woes, in which the Damn'd for ever dwell!
Chaos, the World's and Form's eternal Foe!
And thou, ſole Arbiter of all below,
Pluto! whom ruthleſs Fates a God ordain,
And doom to Immortality of Pain.
Ye fair *Elyſian* Manſions of the Bleſt,
Where no *Theſſalian* Charmer hopes to reſt!
Styx! and *Perſerphone*, compell'd to fly
Thy fruitful Mother, and the chearful Sky!
Third *Hecate!* by whom my Whiſpers breathe
My ſecret Purpoſe to the Shades beneath!
Thou greedy *Dog*, who at the infernal Gate,
In everlaſting Hunger ſtill muſt wait!
And thou, old *Charon*, horrible, and hoar!
For ever lab'ring back from Shore to Shore, &c.
Hear all ye *Powers!* if e'er your Hell rejoice
In the lov'd Horrors of this impious Voice, &c.
Hear, and obey, &c.

Pharſalia, Lib. vi.

(e) 1 Sam. xxviii. 10. (f) Vid. *Le Clerc*'s Comment. in 1 *Sam.* xxviii. *paſſim.* (g) The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. I.

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might poſſibly be deceiv'd by an *Impoſtor* in *Samuel*'s Guiſe; but was the *ſacred Hiſtorian* therefore deceiv'd, or did he mean to deceive us, when he gives us this plain Account of an Apparition? *Saul* was a bold Man, and too ſagacious to become a *Dupe* to a ſilly Woman. He and his two Attendants came upon her by Night, and before ſhe was prepar'd to act any Juggle or Impoſture. They were two well acquainted with the Voice, and Stature, and Figure of *Samuel*, for any other to *perſonate* him, without being detected. But admitted the Cheat paſs'd upon them, how can we think, but that the Author of this Account, who pretends to relate the Tranſaction as it really happen'd, and is ſuppos'd to have wrote by the *Inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt*, would, in ſome Meaſure, have let us into the *Secret* of this Impoſture. His Buſineſs doubtleſs was to expoſe ſuch Practices, as far as Truth would allow, and therefore it is unaccountable (unleſs he meant to delude us with a falſe Perſuaſion) that he ſhould omit every Thing, that tended to diſcover the Fraud, and, in his Narration, inſert every Thing, that tended to confirm the Reality of the Prophet's Appearance.

(b) THAT Spirits of another World may aſſume ſuch Vehicles, as may admit them to a ſenſible Commerce with us, in like Manner as our Spirits are cloath'd with theſe Bodies of ours, the beſt Philoſophy will admit; and that they have done ſo upon extraordinary Occaſions, *(i)* the Appearance of *Moſes* and *Elias*, and their converſing with our Saviour on the Mount, do abundantly teſtify. And therefore if God, for wiſe Reaſons of his Providence, thought fit either to appoint, or permit *Samuel* to appear to *Saul* upon this Occaſion, there ſeems to be no more Difficulty in the Thing, than his appearing to him at any other Time, while he was alive, and ſubſiſting in the World: For *Saul* ſaw his Spirit then no more than he did now, and his Spirit was every whit as able to bear a Body as it was then. From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

'TIS own'd indeed, that, according to the Series of the Narration, *Saul* did not ſee the *Apparition* (be it what it will) ſo ſoon as the Woman did, becauſe probably the Woman's Body, or ſome other Object might interpoſe between him and the firſt Appearance; or perhaps, becauſe the *Vehicle*, which *Samuel* aſſum'd upon this Occaſion, was not, as yet, *condens'd* enough to be viſible to *Saul*, tho' it was to the Woman: But that he did actually ſee him is manifeſt, becauſe when he *perceived* (which Word in the *Original* ſignifies *ſeeing ſo*, as to be aſſur'd of our *Object*) *that it was* Samuel, † *he ſtooped with his Face to the Ground, and bowed himſelf*; which a Man is not apt to do to bare *Ideas* or *Imaginations*.

PERSONS of this Woman's Character, who are under the Diſpleaſure of the Government, generally affect Obſcurity, live privately, and are little acquainted with Affairs of *State:* But ſuppoſe her to have been never ſo great a *Politician*, and never ſo intimate with what had paſs'd between *Saul* and *Samuel* heretofore, never ſo well aſſur'd, that God had rejected him, and elected *David* in his Stead; yet how could ſhe come to the Knowledge of this, *viz.* That the Battle ſhould be fought the next Day, the *Iſraelites* be routed, *Saul* and his Sons ſlain, and their Spoils fall into the Enemy's Hands; ſince each

(b) The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*. Vol. I.

(i) Matth. xvii. 3.

† That *Saul*'s *ſtooping to the Ground*, and *bowing himſelf*, was a certain Indication of his *ſeeing* Samuel, is apparent from ſeveral Expreſſions of the ſame Nature in the ſacred Hiſtory. Thus, when *Jacob* met *Eſau*, the Text tells us, that the *Handmaids, and* Leah, *and* Rachel, *and their Children bowed themſelves*, Gen. xxxiii. 2. When *David* aroſe out of his Hiding-place, upon the Signal, that *Jonathan* gave him, the Text tells us, that *he fell with his Face to the Ground, and bowed himſelf*, 1 Sam. xx. 41. And when the Meſſenger from *Saul*'s Camp came to *David* at *Ziklag*, the Text tells us, that *he fell to the Earth, and did Obeiſance*, 2 Sam. xiv. 4. But the Text takes no Notice, either of the Meſſenger's *ſeeing* David, or *David*'s *ſeeing* Jonathan: Or, *Jacob*'s Family *ſeeing* Eſau. This is ſufficiently imply'd in their making their *Obeiſance* to them; becauſe it is incongruous to ſuppoſe, that any would *bow*, and ſhew other Tokens of outward Reverence and Reſpect to Perſons they did not ſee. *The Hiſtory of the Life of King* David, Vol. I.

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of theſe Events (even in the preſent Situation of *Saul*'s Affairs) were highly caſual and uncertain? For might not this Prince loſe a Battle, without loſing his Life? Or, if he himſelf fell in the Action, why muſt his three Sons be all cut off in the ſame Day? Whatever Demonſtrations of *innate* Bravery he had given in Times paſt, after ſuch ſevere Menaces as he now receiv'd from the *Apparition*; Prudence, one would think, would have put him upon providing for his Safety, either by *chicaning* with the Enemy, or retiring from the Field of Battle, without going to expoſe himſelf, his Sons, and his whole Army, to certain and inevitable Death. Theſe are Things which no human *Penetration* could reach, and which only *he*, who is the abſolute and Almighty Ruler of all Cauſes and Events, could either foreſee or foretel: And how unlikely is it, that God Almighty ſhould make uſe of this *Sorcereſs (k)* as a Propheteſs, and give her the Honour of revealing his Counſels, when at the ſame Time, he concurr'd with her in the Impoſition put upon *Saul*, by making him believe that *Samuel* appear'd and talk'd, when there was no *Samuel* there?

But the Truth is, thoſe menacing Predictions, how proper ſoever for a Meſſenger ſent from God to utter, were highly imprudent, either in this *Witch*'s, or her *Accomplice*'s Mouth: For, ſince they knew nothing of *Futurity*, and were, at the beſt, but put to *Conjecture*, it is much more reaſonable to believe, that, at ſuch a Juncture as this, *(l)* they would have bethought themſelves of flattering the King, and giving him Comfort, and promiſing Succeſs, and not of thundering out ſuch *Comminations* againſt him, as might probably incenſe him, but could do themſelves no good. They could not but know, that the Temper of moſt Kings is to hate to hear *ſhocking* Truths, and to receive with the utmoſt Deſpite thoſe, that bring them ill News: And therefore 'tis natural to ſuppoſe, that had theſe threatening Replies been of the Woman's, or her *Confederate*'s forming, they would have given them quite another Turn, and not run the Hazard of diſobliging the King to no Purpoſe, by laying an additional Load of Trouble upon him. In ſhort, *(m)* the whole Tenor of *Samuel*'s Speech to King *Saul* is too rough and ungrateful, too grave and ſolemn, I may add alſo, too full of Truth and Reality, ever to have proceeded from their Contrivance and Invention only.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

The Woman, by her courteous Entertainment of *Saul*, ſeems to be a Perſon of no bad Nature; and therefore, if ſhe had an *Accomplice*, who underſtood to make the moſt of his Profeſſion, his Buſineſs at this Time muſt have been, to *ſooth* and *cajole* the King, which would have both put Money in his Pocket, and ſav'd the Credit of his Predictions. For, had he foretold him of Succeſs, and Victory, and a happy Iſſue out of all his Troubles, he, and the Woman, had been ſure of Reputation, as well as farther Rewards, in Caſe it had happen'd to prove ſo; and if it had not, (ſince no one was privy to their Communion) the Falſhood of the Prediction, upon *Saul*'s Defeat and Death, muſt, in Courſe, have been bury'd with him.

From theſe Reaſons then we may infer, that the Woman, in this Tranſaction, did not impoſe upon *Saul*, ſince he had a plain Sight of the Apparition: What the Apparition foretold him was above human Penetration; and (upon the Suppoſition of a *Juggle)* the *Witch*, and her Confederate would have certainly acted clean contrary to what they did. And ſo the next.

2. *Enquiry* meets us, namely, *What this Apparition was?* Some of the ancient *Doctors*, both of the *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* Church, have made an *Evil Angel* the Subject of this Apparition, in pure Regard to the Honour of God. "God "*ſay they*, had ſufficiently declar'd his "Hatred againſt *Necromancy*, and all "Kinds

The Arguments of thoſe, who pretend this Apparition was Diabolical.

(k) Waterland's Sermons, Vol. II. *(l) Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur l'Apparition de *Samuel*. *(m) Waterland*, Ibid.

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" Kinds of *Witchcraft*, in the ſevere " Laws which he enacted againſt them; " but 'tis certainly denying himſelf, and " cancelling his own Work, to ſeem in " the leaſt to countenance, or abet them, " as he neceſſarily muſt do, if, upon " the Evocation of an old *Hag*, any " Meſſenger is permitted to go from him. " Far be it from us therefore to have " ſuch Conceptions of God. He is holy, " and juſt, and uniform in all his Ways; " and therefore this *coming at a Call*, " and doing the *Witch*'s Drudgery, muſt " only appertain to ſome *infernal* Spirit, " who might poſſibly find his Account " in it at laſt. 'Twas one of this wick- " ed Crew, that either aſſumed a *Phan-* " *tom*, or a real Body, appear'd in a " *Mantle* like *Samuel*, ſpake articulately, " and held this Converſation with *Saul*; " which, conſidering his Knowledge and " Foreſight of Things, he was well " enough qualified to do, notwithſtand- " ing the ſundry Predictions, relating to " future *Contingencies*, which are contain'd " in it."

Anſwer'd, by ſhewing it was not the Devil.

HOW far the Honour of God is concern'd in this Tranſaction, will more properly fall under our next Enquiry: In the mean Time, I cannot but obſerve, that, whatever *Incongruity* may be ſuppos'd in the real *Appearance* of *Samuel*, it is not near ſo much, as to find one of the *apoſtate* Spirits of *Hell* expreſſing ſo much Zeal for the Service of the God of *Heaven*, and upbraiding *Saul* with thoſe very Crimes which he himſelf tempted him to commit; as to find this wicked and impure Spirit making uſe of the Name of God (that ſacred and tremendous Name, whoſe very Pronunciation was enough to make him quake and ſhiver) no leſs than ſix Times in this Intercourſe with *Saul*, without any Manner of Uneaſineſs or Heſitation; as to find this Angel of Darkneſs, and *Father of Lies*, prying into the Womb of *Futurity*, and determining the moſt caſual *Events* poſitively and preciſely. *(n)* We do not indeed deny, but that the Devil's Knowledge is vaſtly ſuperior to that of the moſt accompliſh'd human Underſtanding; that his natural *Penetration*, join'd with his long Experience, is ſuch, that the greateſt *Philoſophers*, the ſubtleſt *Criticks*, and the moſt refined *Politicians* are mere *Novices* in Compariſon of him: Yet what *Genius*, (however exalted and improved) without a divine *Revelation*, could (as we ſaid before) be able to foretel Things, that were lodg'd in God's own Breaſt; *viz.* the preciſe Time of the two Armies engaging, the Succeſs and Conſequence of the Victory, and the very Names of the Perſons, that were to fall in Battle. This is what the Apparition plainly revealed to *Saul:* And yet this, we dare maintain, is more than any *finite* Underſtanding, by its own mere Capacity, could ever have been able to find out.

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

But Samuel.

BUT (without this Multitude of Arguments) if we are to take the Scripture in its plain and literal Senſe, read we over the Story of *Saul* and the Witch of *Endor* never ſo often, we ſhall not ſo much as once find the Devil mention'd in it. And therefore 'tis ſomewhat wonderful, that he ſhould be brought upon the *Stage* by many learned Men, merely to ſolve a *Difficulty*, which, upon Examination, appears to be none at all. But now, on the other Hand, it appears, that, thro' the whole Narration, *Samuel* is the only Thing that is mention'd. 'Tis *Samuel*, whom *Saul* deſires to be call'd up; *Samuel*, who appear'd to the Woman; *Samuel*, whom the Woman deſcribes; *Samuel*, whom *Saul* perceives and bows himſelf to, with whom he converſes ſo long, and, *becauſe of whoſe Words, he was* afterwards ſo ſore afraid.

THE Scripture indeed ſpeaks ſometimes according to the *Appearance of* Things, and may call that by the Name of *Samuel*, which was only the *Semblance*, or

(n) Saurin, Vol IV. Diſſert. 36.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1116, &c.

or *Phantom* of him: But, that this cannot be the Senſe of the Matter here, we have the Teſtimony of the wiſe Son of *Sirach*, (an excellent Interpreter of *canonical* Scriptures) who tells us expreſsly, that *(o)* Samuel, *after his Death, propheſied, and ſhewed the King his End*; purſuant to what we read in the Verſion of the *Septuagint*, viz. that, *(p)* Saul *aſked Counſel of one, that had a familiar Spirit, and* Samuel *anſwered him.* So that, upon the whole, we may be allow'd to conclude, that it was the real Soul of *Samuel*, cloath'd in ſome viſible *Form*, which, at this Time, appear'd to the King of *Iſrael:* But by what *Means*, or for what *Purpoſes*, it appear'd, is the other Queſtion, we are now to determine.

That Samuel *was not rais'd up by the Devil.*

3. Several of the *(q) Fathers* of the *Chriſtian* Church were of Opinion, that the Devil had a certain *limited* Power over the Souls of the Saints, before *Jeſus Chriſt deſcended into Hell*, and reſcued them from the Tyranny of that Prince of Darkneſs. *(r)* St *Auſtin*, in particular, thinks, that there is no Abſurdity in ſaying, that the Devil was able to call up *Samuel*'s Soul, as he was to preſent himſelf *among the Sons* of God, or ſet our Saviour *on one of the Pinacles of the Temple*; and a *(s)* learned *Jewiſh* Doctor ſuppoſes, that Devils have ſuch a Power over human Souls, for the Space of a Year after their Departure, as to make them aſſume what Bodies they pleaſe; and thereupon he concludes, (but very erroneouſly) that it was not a Year, from the Time of *Samuel*'s Death, to his Appearance. But theſe are ſuch wild and extravagant Fancies, as deſerve no ſerious Confutation. 'Tis abſurd to ſay, that the Souls of Saints (ſuch as we are now ſpeaking of) were ever in *Hell*, and more abſurd to ſay, that if they are in Heaven, it is in the Power of any *magical*, nay, of any *diabolical* Incantations to call them down from thence. *(t)* Great, without all doubt, is the Power of *apoſtate* Angels; but miſerable, we may ſay would the State of the Bleſſed be, if the other had any Licence to diſturb their Happineſs, when, and as long, as they pleas'd: For *God forbid, (u)* ſays *Tertullian, that we ſhould believe, that the Soul of any holy Man, much leſs of a Prophet, ſhould be ſo far* under his Diſpoſal, *as to be brought up* at Pleaſure *by the Power of the Devil.* From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

Nor by the Witch's Enchantments, but by God's Direction.

Since the *Devil* then has no Power to diſturb the Happineſs of *Souls* departed, this Apparition of *Samuel* could not proceed from any *magical* Enchantments of the Sorcereſs, but muſt have been effected by the ſole Power and Appointment of God, who is the ſovereign Lord both of the Living and of the Dead: And, accordingly, we may obſerve from the Surpriſe, which the Woman diſcover'd upon *Samuel*'s ſudden appearing, that the Power of her *Magick* was not concern'd therein, but that it was the Effect of ſome ſuperior Hand. The Scripture relates the Matter thus: *(x) When the Woman ſaw* Samuel, *ſhe cried with a loud Voice*; *and the Woman ſpake unto* Saul, *ſaying, Why haſt thou deceived me, for thou art* Saul? *And the King ſaid unto her, Be not afraid: What ſaweſt thou? And the Woman ſaid unto* Saul, *I ſaw Gods aſcending out of the Earth.* Now, it is plain, from this Narration, that the Woman ſaw ſomething ſhe was not accuſtom'd to ſee. *(y)* Her *Necromancy* had *ordinarily* Power over *Dæmons* only, or ſuch wretched Spirits, as were ſubmitted to the Devil's Tyranny; but, on this Occaſion, ſhe ſaw an Object, ſo auguſt, ſo terrible, ſo majeſtick, ſo contrary indeed to any Thing ſhe had ever rais'd before, and that coming upon her before ſhe had begun her Enchantments, that ſhe could not forbear being frighten'd, *and crying out with a loud Voice*, as being fully

(o) Eccluſ. xlvi. 20. *(p)* 1 Chron. x. 13. *(q) Juſtin Martyr*, in Dial. cum Tryph. and *Origen*, in 1 Reg. Cap. xxviii. *(r)* De Diver. Quæſt. lib. ii. p. 4. *(s) R. Manaſ. Ben Iſrael*, de Reſurr. Mort. *(t) Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 36. *(u)* De Anima, c. 57. *(x)* 1 Sam. xxviii. 12, 13. *(y) Calmet*'s Diſſert. ſur l'Apparit. de *Samuel*.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1116, &c.

fully ſatisfy'd, that the Apparition came from God.

An Objection.

"BUT, ſince the Scripture aſſures us, "that God had wholly withdrawn him-"ſelf from *Saul*, and would anſwer him "neither by *Prophets*, nor by *Dreams*; "how can we imagine, that he ſhould, "all on a ſudden, become ſo kind, as to "ſend *Samuel* to him, or that *Samuel* "ſhould be in any Diſpoſition to come, "when it was impoſſible for him to do "any Good by his coming."

Anſwer'd, by ſhewing upon what Accounts God ſent a Meſſenger to Saul.

(z) Now there ſeems to be ſome *Analogy* between God's dealing with *Saul* in this Particular, and his former Treatment of the Prophet *Balaam*. *Balaam* was for diſobeying the Orders which God had given him to bleſs the *Iſraelites*; and was ſearching into *magical* Secrets for what he could not obtain of God, *viz.* a Power to change into Curſes the Bleſſings, which God pronounc'd by his Mouth. In this Caſe there was but ſmall Likelihood, that God would continue to communicate himſelf to a Perſon ſo unworthy of any extraordinary Revelation; and yet he did it: But then it was with a Deſign to reveal to him thoſe very Miſeries, from which his *mercenary* Mind was ſo deſirous to reſcue the *Midianites*. The Application is eaſy: And it farther ſuggeſts this Reaſon, why God appointed *Samuel*, at this Time, to appear unto *Saul*, *viz.* that, thro' him, he might give him a *Meeting* where he leaſt of all expected one; and might ſhew him, that the Fate, which his own Diſobedience had brought upon him, was determin'd; that there was no reverſing the Decrees of Heaven, no procuring Aid againſt the *Almighty*'s Power, no *fleeing* (tho' it were to *Hell*) *from his Preſence*, no hiding himſelf in *Darkneſs* from his Inſpection, *(a) with whom Darkneſs is no Darkneſs at all, but the Night is as clear as the Day, and the Darkneſs and Light are both alike.*

And why it was Samuel.

(b) THAT the Souls of Men *departed* have a *Capacity*, and, no doubt, an *Inclination* to be employ'd in the Service of Men *alive*, as having the ſame Nature and Affections, and being more ſenſible of our Infirmities, than any *pure* and *abſtracted* Spirits are, can hardly be conteſted; that, in their abſent State, they are embodied with *aërial*, or *ætherial* Vehicles, which they can condenſe, or rarify at Pleaſure, and ſo appear, or not appear to human Sight, is what ſome of the greateſt Men, both of the *Heathen* and *Chriſtian* Religion, have maintain'd; and that frequent Apparitions of this Kind have happen'd, ſince the World began, cannot be denied by any one, that is converſant in its Hiſtory. If therefore the Wiſdom of God (for Reaſons already aſſign'd) thought proper to diſpatch a Meſſenger to *Saul*, upon this Occaſion; there may be ſome Account given, why the Soul of *Samuel* (upon the Suppoſition it was left to its *Option*) ſhould rather be deſirous to be ſent upon that Errand: For, whatever may be ſaid in Diminution of *Saul*'s religious Character, 'tis certain, that he was a brave Prince and Commander; had liv'd in ſtrict Intimacy with *Samuel*; profeſs'd a great Eſteem for him in all Things; and *(c)* was, by *Samuel*, not a little lamented, when he had fallen from his Obedience to God. Upon theſe Conſiderations we may imagine, that the Soul of *Samuel* might have ſuch a Kindneſs for him, as to be ready to appear to him in the Depth of his Diſtreſs, in order to ſettle his Mind by telling him the *Upſhot* of the whole Matter, *viz.* that he ſhould loſe the Battle, and he and his Sons be ſlain; that ſo he might give a Specimen (as the *Jews* love to ſpeak in Commendation of him) of the braveſt Valour, that was ever atchiev'd by any Commander; fight boldly when he was ſure to die; and ſell his Life at as dear a Price as poſſible; that ſo in his Death, he might be commemorated with Honour, and deſerve the *Threnodia*, which his *Son-in-law* made on him; *(d) The Beauty of* Iſrael *is ſlain upon*

From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

9 D

(z) *Saurin*, Vol. IV. Diſſert. 36.

(a) Pſal. cxxxix. 12.

(b) Vide *Glanvil*'s Sadduciſmus Triumphatus.

(c) 1 Sam. xvi. 1.

(d) 2 Sam. i. 19.

A. M. 2888, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1116, &c.

upon the high Places. How are the Mighty fallen! From the Blood of the Slain, from the Fat of the Mighty, the Bow of Jonathan *turned not back, and the Sword of* Saul *turned not empty. How are the Mighty fallen in the Midſt of the Battle!* From 1 Sam. i. to the End.

CHAP. IV.

From the Death of Saul, *to that of* Absalom. *In all Thirty Three Years.*

The History.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

Upon the Death of Saul, David *is proclaim'd King of* Judah, *and* Iſhboſheth *has the other Tribes.*

DAVID was at *Ziklag*, when News was brought him of the Defeat of the *Iſraelitiſh* Army, and of the Death of *Saul*. The Meſſenger was an *Amalekite*, † who pretended that he was the Perſon who diſpatched the King, after he found himſelf mortally wounded; and (however he came by them) produc'd *Saul*'s Crown and Bracelet to verify what he ſaid. He expected, no doubt, an ample Compenſation for this Meſſage and Preſent; but, inſtead of that, *David* order'd his Guards to fall upon him, becauſe (according to his own Declaration) he had been acceſſary to the King's Death. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

Upon this Conjuncture, *David*, † by God's Directions, remov'd with his Family and Forces † to *Hebron*, whither the Princes of *Judah*, in a ſhort Time, came to congratulate his Return into his *native* Country, and to offer him the Crown of their particular Tribe; for, by this Time, *Abner*, the late King's Uncle, and General of his Army, who had proclaim'd his Son *Iſhboſheth* Succeſſor to the Throne,

† By the Account, which we have of King *Saul*'s Death, in the Concluſion of the foregoing Book, *viz.* that he *fell upon his own Sword*, and expir'd, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 4. it ſeems very evident, that the whole Story of this *Amalekite* was a Fiction of his own inventing, on Purpoſe to ingratiate himſelf *with* David, the preſumptive Succeſſor to the Throne: But then the Queſtion is, how he came by *Saul*'s Crown and Bracelet, ſince it is incongruous to think that he would ever wear them in the Time of Action, and thereby expoſe himſelf as a publick Mark? As therefore it is preſum'd, that they were carry'd into the Field of Battle by ſome of his Attendants, in order to be put on, in Caſe he had obtain'd the Victory, and return'd in Triumph; ſo the *Jews* have a Conceit, that *Doeg*, the infamous Murtherer of the Prieſts at *Nob*, 1 Sam. xxii. 18. who, at this Time, was his Armour-Bearer, had them in his Poſſeſſion, and, before he killed himſelf, gave them to his Son, (this young *Amalekite*) and order'd him to carry them to *David*, but to his Coſt found, that *David*'s Reception was quite different to what he expected. For, being ſhortly to aſcend the Throne himſelf, he was willing to have it believ'd, that to ſlay *the Lord's Anointed*, upon any Account whatever, was in itſelf an execrable Crime, and therefore, to clear himſelf from the Imputation of being any Ways acceſſory to ſo foul a Fact, (as his Enemies would have been apt to imagine, had he given countenance to this pretended King-killer) he order'd him immediately to be put to Death, and therein, at leaſt, acted the Part of a good Politician, if not of a righteous Judge. *Le Clerc*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries on 2 *Sam.* i.

† Though *David*, after *Saul*'s Demiſe, had a Right to the Kingdom by Virtue of God's *Deſignation*; yet, as God had no where declar'd, at what Time he was to make uſe of this *Right*, he would not enter into Poſſeſſion, nor take the Adminiſtration of publick Affairs upon him, without having firſt conſulted him. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† *Hebron* was ſituate in the Midſt of the Tribe of *Judah*; and, as it was a very ancient City, the *Metropolis* of the whole Tribe, and the Poſſeſſion of thoſe Prieſtly Families, who eſpous'd *David*'s Intereſt. It was a very commodious City for him to make the Place of his Reſidence at this Juncture; as being not unſenſible, that the Determination of the Metropolis in his Favour would be of great Weight to influence the whole Tribe: And, accordingly, we find, that he was ſoon inveſted with the Sovereignty thereof. *For the Men of* Judah (ſaith the Text) *came, and there they anointed* David *King over the Houſe of* Judah, 2 *Sam.* ii. 4. The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

A. M. 2919, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1053, &c.

Throne, had taken up his Reſidence at † *Mahanaim*, on the other Side of *Jordan*, and, by his Intereſt and great Authority, prevail'd with all the other Tribes to *recognize* him.

A Battle between the two Rival Kings.

DAVID however, at the Requeſt of the Princes of his own Tribe, was anointed King of *Judah*. For two Years there were no Hoſtilities on either Side, but, not long after this, a War commenc'd between the two *Rival Princes*, in which there were ſeveral Engagements, but none ſo remarkable, as that, which was occaſion'd by *Abner*'s ſending *Joab* (who was the General of *David*'s Forces) a Challenge † to fight twelve Men with an equal Number of his in ſingle Combat. The Men met, and (to a Man) kill'd one another upon the Spot; whereupon a fierce Battle enſu'd, in which *Abner* and his Men were defeated, and put to Flight. In the Purſuit, *Aſahel*, a younger Brother of *Joab*'s, being very nimble and ſwift of Foot, made after *Abner*. When he came up with him, *Abner*, who knew him, deſir'd him to deſiſt, and not pretend to attack him, becauſe he was loth to kill him; but the young Man, ambitious of taking a *General* Priſoner, preſs'd ſo hard upon him, that, † with a Back-ſtroke of his Spear, *Abner* gave him a Wound, whereof he immediately died.

THE victorious Army, when they came to the Place, where *Aſahel*'s Body lay ſlain, ſtood ſtill, and ceas'd their Purſuit; ſo that *Abner* had an Opportunity to rally his ſcatter'd Forces, and making a Stand upon an advanc'd Ground, where he could not well be attack'd, ſounded a Parly, and reminded *Joab*, that they were all Brethren, of the ſame *Nation*, of the ſame *Religion*, ſo that if they perſiſted in *Hoſtilities*, both Armies would have Reaſon to rue it. Whereupon they parted, *Abner* (who had loſt *three hundred and ſixty* Men in the Engagement) to *Mahanaim*, on the other Side of *Jordan*, and *Joab*, who (except his Brother *Aſahel*) had loſt no more than *nineteen*, to *Hebron*. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

DURING the Courſe of this *Civil* War, which laſted for ſome Years, *David*'s Forces, in moſt *Rencounters*, had the Advantage, and his Intereſt in the Nation increas'd, as that of *Iſhboſheth* ſenſibly declin'd. *Abner* indeed, as being both a brave and experienc'd Warrior, and a Man of great Power and Influence in all the Tribes, more eſpecially in that of *Benjamin*, was his main Support; but with him he unhappily differ'd, upon Account of *Rizpah*, one of *Saul*'s Concubines, whom *Abner* had debauch'd. To have any Commerce with the *Relicts* of Princes (of what Denomination ſoever they were) was, in theſe Days, look'd upon as an Indignity offer'd to the royal Family, and an † Affectation of the Kingdom. For this Reaſon *Iſhboſheth* remonſtrated

Joab kills Abner very baſely, which highly diſpleaſes David.

† This was a Place in the Tribe of *Gad*, which had its Name from the Appearance of an Hoſt of Angels to *Jacob*, as he came, with his Family and all his Subſtance to *Padan-aram*, Gen. xxxii. 1. and the Reaſons for *Abner*'s retreating hither, in the Beginning of the new King's Reign, were, that he might ſecure the People on that Side of the *Jordan*, and eſpecially the gallant Inhabitants of *Jabeſh gilead*, who were great Lovers of *Saul*, and attach'd to his Family; that he might prevent the *Philiſtines* from falling upon the King, whom he had under his Protection, in the Infancy of his Reign; and chiefly, that he might be at a great Diſtance from *David*, have the new King more abſolutely under his Command, and a better Opportunity of raiſing Recruits among a People, not only brave and courageous, but very well affected to the Cauſe, which he had eſpous'd. *Calmet*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

† The Expreſſion in the Text is, *Let the young Men now ariſe, and play before us:* By which *Abner* ſeems to have meant, not that they ſhould fall upon, and deſtroy one another, but merely, that they ſhould practiſe a little their military Exerciſes, or *play at Sharps*, as *Gladiators* antiently at *Rome*, and now among us, are wont to do, not with any Purpoſe to kill one another, but only to *divert* the Spectators. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† The Expreſſion in the Text is, ——— That, *with the hinder Part of the Spear, he ſmote him under the fifth Rib*; which *Virgil*, ſpeaking of a mortal Wound, has not unhappily imitated:

——— —— Haud multa moratus
Excipit in latus, &, quà fata celerrima, crudum
Tranſadigit coſtas & crates pectoris enſem. Æn. xii.

† What Notion the World, at this Time, had of marrying any *Royal* Relict, is evident from the Caſe of *Adonijah*, whom *Solomon* put to Death for deſiring but to aſk for *Abiſhag*, one of *David*'s Concubines, tho' he had employ'd *Bath ſheba*, the King's Mother to be his Interceſſor, and was himſelf his Brother, 1 *Kings* ii. 17. It may be ſaid, perhaps,

A. M. 2940, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

ſtrated the Matter to *Abner*; but *Abner*, who was an hot Man, and impatient of Reproof, was ſo incens'd at what he ſaid, that he upbraided him with Ingratitude, and threaten'd not only to † withdraw his own Allegiance from him, but, as far as in him lay, to carry all *Iſrael* over to *David*'s Intereſt. And as he threaten'd, ſo he did. From that very Moment he enter'd into a *private* Correſpondence with *David*, and, not long after, had a *publick* Interview with him. At this Interview *David* entertain'd *Abner* and his Attendants (which were in all but twenty Perſons) very ſplendidly; and, in Return, *Abner* aſſur'd him, that he would uſe his utmoſt Endeavours to prevail with the other Tribes to come over to his Side. But, no ſooner was he gone, than *Joab*, returning from an Expedition againſt the *Philiſtines*, wherein he had been ſucceſsful and taken Abundance of Spoil, and being ſoon inform'd, that *Abner* had been there, and how kindly the King had receiv'd him, he not only expoſtulated the Matter with the King in high Terms, as having entertain'd a Man that came only as a *Spy* upon him, but ſent likewiſe a Meſſenger after *Abner*, deſiring him to return, becauſe the King had ſomething more to communicate to him; and ſo, having *way-laid* him, under Pretence of ſaluting him, he ſtabb'd him to the Heart, * out of Jealouſy partly, and partly in Revenge of the Blood of his Brother *Aſahel*. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

DAVID was extremely diſpleas'd at this cruel and inhoſpitable Action; but his Affairs were in ſo unſettled a State, and *Joab*, at that Time, had ſo much Credit with the Army, that he could not call him to an Account for what he had done: And therefore contented himſelf with declaring publickly † his Deteſtation of it, and with making a magnificent Funeral for *Abner*, wherein he himſelf follow'd the *Corps*, as chief Mourner.

DAVID

perhaps, that *Adonijah* was at this Time aſpiring at the Throne, which *Solomon* perceiving, took Occaſion from this his Requeſt to fall out with him, and prevent it. But, however this be, a general Rule it was, not among the *Jews* only, but among other Nations, that no private Perſon ſhould preſume to marry the King's Widow; for this made him appear as a *Rival*, and Competitor for the Crown. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† *Abner* is an Inſtance of what a ſtrange Alteration the Study of Revenge will work in a Man. It was but juſt lately, that we found him going about the Country to confirm the *Iſraelites* in their Attachment to the Houſe of *Saul*, and Oppoſition to *David*; but now, upon a ſlight Diſguſt, he is not only for deſerting himſelf, but for carrying all the Strength of his Intereſt over to the oppoſite Party: For *ſuch is the Genius of many great Miniſters*, ſays one, *that, upon ſlight Occaſions, they are irritated, and do rather rule over Kings, than are ruled by them.* *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* *Abner* was a Man longer vers'd in *military* Affairs than himſelf, who, in the Time of *Saul*'s Diſtraction, had been *Regent* of the Nation, and ſince the Time, that he had ſet up *Iſhboſheth* to be King, Prime Miniſter: And therefore *Joab* had Reaſon to ſuſpect, that, in Caſe he once got into *David*'s Favour, as the Service, he was able to do him, gave him a Title to it) it would not be long before he would gain a ſuperior Aſcendant; and therefore he took this wicked Method to prevent him. For (to uſe the Reflection, which *Joſephus* makes upon this Occaſion) *What will not Men dare to do, who are covetous, ambitious, and will be inferior to none?* They preſs forward to the *End*, without ever conſidering the *Means*, and *will commit a Thouſand Crimes in Purſuit of what they deſire. Nor are they leſs bold in maintaining, than they were in acquiring their Places and Preferments by evil Practices; inſomuch that, rather than ſuffer the Diſgrace of loſing what they have unjuſtly gotten, they will plunge themſelves ſtill deeper and deeper in Wickedneſs, to retain it.* *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 1.

† And Reaſon good he had to expreſs his Deteſtation of ſo foul a Fact. For, beſides that, *Abner* was himſelf a Man of great Power and Authority, and, at this Time, the Head of the contrary Party, it carry'd an Air of Suſpicion, that *David* might have ſome Concern in the Murder; eſpecially ſince *Joab*, his Firſt Miniſter, and General of his Forces, was the wicked Inſtrument of it. *Abner* had been reconcil'd to *David* indeed, but this made the Matter ſtill worſe, and added the Breach of Faith and Hoſpitality to the Sin of Murder, which was enough to alienate the Minds of the *Iſraelites* from him for ever: And therefore *Joſephus* gives us this Account of *David*'s Behaviour, upon ſo critical an Occaſion, not only to teſtify his Abhorrence of ſo baſe a Practice, but to purge himſelf likewiſe, upon the ſtricteſt Niceties of Faith and Honour, that he had been true to *Abner*. "The Moment he heard of *Abner*'s "Death, he ſtretch'd out his Right-Hand towards Heaven in an Appeal, and Proteſtation, that *he was neither Privy*, "*nor conſenting to the Fact*, and curs'd moſt bitterly the *Aſſaſſin*, (whoever he was) his Family, and Accomplices. He "appointed, by *Proclamation*, a publick Mourning for him, with all the *Solemnities* of tearing Garments, and putting "on Sack Cloth, *&c.* Himſelf, with his great Miniſters, and Officers, aſſiſted at the Funeral, and gave ſufficient "Demonſtration, by wringing their Hands, beating their Breaſts, and other Expreſſions of Sorrow, both of the Ve"neration they had for *Abner*'s Memory, and the Senſe they had of ſo ineſtimable a Loſs; ſo that, in the Concluſion, "all the People were perfectly ſatisfy'd, that *David* was far, either from approving, or conſenting to ſo execrable a "Deed." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 1. and *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

Upon the Death of Iſhboſheth, David *is made King of all* Iſrael.

DAVID indeed had Reaſon to lament the Death of *Abner*, which, in all Probability, had defeated the Meaſures that were concerted for the *Union* of the two Kingdoms, had not the ſudden and untimely Death of *Iſhboſheth* pav'd the Way for it afreſh. *Iſhboſheth*, upon the Loſs of *Abner*, began to deſpair of his Affairs, grew negligent of himſelf, and fell under the Contempt of his Subjects; ſo that *Rechab* and *Baanah*, † two *Benjamites*, that were of his Houſhold, came upon him, as he was aſleep in the Heat of the Day, and, having cut off his Head, † carry'd it as a Preſent to *David* at *Hebron*; but, inſtead of the Reward which they expected, he * rebuk'd them ſeverely, and order'd their Hands and Feet to be cut off, and themſelves hung up in a publick Place, for the Terror of all *Regicides*; but the Head of *Iſhboſheth* was honourably interr'd in *Abner*'s Tomb. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

WHEN *Iſhboſheth* was dead, all the Tribes of *Iſrael* ſent their Deputies to *David*, acknowledging his Title, and promiſing him their Allegiance, upon Condition that he would reign *righteouſly* † over them; ſo that now he was anointed King over all the Tribes, after that he had reign'd at *Hebron*, over That of *Judah* only, for the Space of ſeven Years and ſix Months.

BEING

† This is added, to ſhew us, that theſe two *Regicides* were not only Officers in the King's Army, but of the ſame Tribe with *Saul*, and therefore had more Ties than one upon them, to be honeſt and faithful to his Family. For there is Reaſon to believe, that *Saul*, who liv'd in the Borders of *Benjamin*, conferr'd more Favours upon that Tribe, than any other, and might therefore juſtly expect, both to him and his, a greater Eſteem and Fidelity from thoſe of his own Tribe, than from others. This *Patronymick* is therefore very properly prefix'd to the Names of *Rechab* and *Baanah*, to ſhew what vile ungrateful Villains they were, and how juſtly they deſerv'd the ſevere and *exemplary* Puniſhment which *David* inflicted on them. *Le Clerc*'s Commmentary.

† It may ſeem a little ſtrange, that theſe two *Ruffians* were not diſcourag'd by *David*'s puniſhing the *Amalekite* for Killing of *Saul*, and by the Deteſtation he had publickly ſhewn of *Joab*'s Baſeneſs in murthering *Abner*: But the *former* of theſe Caſes, they might think, was not parallel to theirs; becauſe *Saul* was anointed King by God's immediate Direction, whereas *Iſhboſheth*, having never had ſuch *ſacred* Unction, was no more than an *Uſurper*: And, as for the *latter*, they might think that *David*'s Conduct, in Relation to *Abner*'s Death, proceeded from Art and Policy, rather than any ſerious Diſlike of the Thing itſelf; and, in this Opinion, they might the rather be confirm'd, when they ſaw *Joab*, inſtead of being puniſh'd, continuing in the very ſame Poſt and Power that he had before. *Pool*'s Annotations.

* The Manner in which *Joſephus* makes *David* expreſs himſelf upon this Occaſion, is to this Effect: ——— " Wicked Wretches that you are! prepare yourſelves immediately to receive the juſt Reward of your Villainy. Do " not you know that I requited the Murder of *Saul*, when he, who had taken away that ſacred Life, had the Con- " fidence to bring me his golden Crown, for an Oſtentation of the Service he had done me in it? And yet it was at " the Inſtance of *Saul* that he did it, and to prevent the Indignity of his being taken alive by his Enemies. And am " not I the ſame Man now that I was then? Or do you think that I am turn'd ſo abandon'd a Wretch ſince, as to " countenance the moſt profligate of Men and Actions, or to account myſelf under any Obligation to you, for dipping " your Hands (upon my Account, as you would have it thought) in the Blood of your Lord? For cutting the Throat " of a Perſon (and in his Bed too) ſo juſt, that he never did any Man Wrong, and ſo generous a Patron and Bene- " factor to your ungrateful Selves, that all the Advantages you can pretend to in this World, are but what you ſtand " indebted for to his Bounty and Goodneſs. You ſhall therefore now be ſure to pay, both for your Breach of Faith " to your Maſter, and the Scandal you have caſt upon me. For what greater Wound can any Man give me in my " Reputation, than to expoſe me for a Perſon, that can take Pleaſure in the Tidings, or give Countenance to the " committing of ſo barbarous an Aſſaſſinate?" *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 2. Which Speech of *David*'s has a good deal of the Spirit of *Alexander the Great* in it, whoſe Exacting of Puniſhment of *Beſſus* for his Murder of *Darius*, drew from the *Hiſtorian* this Reflection: Reputabat enim, *non tam hoſtem ſuum fuiſſe* Darium, *quam Amicum ejus, à quo eſſet occiſus*. Juſtin, lib. xii. c. 6.

† This was *David*'s Part of the Covenant, which the Elders of *Iſrael* ſuggeſted to him in a very elegant *Metaphor*, which here occurs the firſt Time, though afterwards it is frequently us'd in *ſacred* Writ, eſpecially in the *Prophets*, as well as ſome profane Authors. The Expreſſion is, ——— *Thou ſhalt feed my People* Iſrael; which was the rather made uſe of, to put *David* in Mind, that he was created a King, not ſo much for the Advancement of his own Honour and Intereſt, as for the Good and Benefit of the Community, which he was to rule with all Tenderneſs, and watch over with all Diligence. The very Manner of the Expreſſion implies, that Kings ought to have the ſame Care of their People, as the Shepherd has over his Flock; and that, as the Shepherd is not the Owner of the Sheep he keeps, ſo ſhould no King look upon his Subjects as his own *Peculium*, but as a Flock committed to him by the only true Lord of all Mankind, and to whom he muſt give an Account of his Adminiſtration. For *this is the greateſt Grace of a King, that he certainly believes himſelf to be made a King by God for the Sake of the People; and let him often call to Mind, that the People were not created, or ordain'd by God for the King*, ſays *Conradus Pelicanus* upon theſe Words. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1055, &c.

He takes Jeruſalem, *and enlarges it.*

BEING thus inveſted with full regal Power, and having ‡ a Multitude of brave and gallant Soldiers to attend him, he made his firſt Expedition againſt *Jeruſalem*, to diſpoſſeſs the *Jebuſites* of the Fort of *Zion*, which commanded the City, and was thought ſo impregnable, that, when he ſummon'd the Beſieg'd to ſurrender, they, in Deriſion, reply'd, that the Meaneſt of them all († their *Blind* and *Lame)* were able to defend it againſt all he could do. This incens'd *David* to ſuch a Degree, that he caus'd Proclamation to be made through the Camp, that, whoever firſt took the Fort, ſhould be made *Captain-General* of all his Forces; whereupon *Joab*, who was a bold, puſhing Man, undertook to ſtorm it, and carry'd it Sword in Hand. After this, *David*, for the Reception of his Guards and Domeſticks, enlarg'd the Buildings of the Place, and made it his Royal Palace; while *Joab* repair'd, and beautify'd the old City *Jebus*, or *Jeruſalem*, for the more commodious Habitation of his Subjects.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

Subdues the Philiſtine *Princes.*

† *HIRAM*, who had lately made himſelf King of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, hearing how proſperous *David* was in all his Affairs, ſent an Embaſſy to congratulate his Acceſſion to the Throne, and withal a Preſent of Cedar-Trees, with Carpenters and other Artificers to aſſiſt him in his Buildings. But the *Philiſtine* Princes had other Notions of *David*'s growing Greatneſs, which they took for a ſure *Preſage* of their own Downfal; and therefore, to put a Stop to it as ſoon as poſſible, they rais'd one great Army, which (as they approach'd to *Jeruſalem)* he defeated; and, the next Year, when they came † with a much larger, God manifeſtly interpos'd in his Favour. For, inſtead of advancing directly upon them, he order'd him to take a Compaſs round by a Wood of *Mulberry-Trees*, which would cover and conceal his March, and, when he heard a Sound, or Ruſhing in the Trees, (which would affrighten the *Philiſtines)* then to fall upon them; which he accordingly did, and gave them ſo total a Defeat,

‡ In this Account of *David*'s *Worthies*, which are mention'd both in the ſecond Book of *Samuel*, and the firſt of *Chronicles*, there is a great Difference of Names; and the Reaſon is, becauſe the *Catalogue* in *Chronicles* was made in the Beginning of *David*'s Reign, that in *Samuel*, at the latter End; and ſo the former mentions thoſe Men, who had help'd *David* to his Settlement in the Kingdom, whereas the *latter* takes Notice of thoſe, who had ſtuck to him all the Time of his Reign, and died in his Service. *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 5.

† *The Blind and the Lame*, ſays *Luther* upon this Place, *were the Idols of the* Jebuſites, *which, to irritate* David, *they ſet upon their Walls, as their Patrons and Protectors*; and theſe they call *blind* and *lame ſarcaſtically*, and with Reſpect to *David*'s Opinion: As if they had ſaid, "Theſe Gods of ours, whom ye *Iſraelites* approach, as *blind* and "*lame*, and ſo unable to direct or defend us, will ſecure us againſt you, and, to your Coſt, make you find, that "they are neither *blind* nor *lame*, but have Eyes to watch for us, and Hands to fight againſt you, ſo that you muſt "conquer and ſubdue them, before you take this Place." But this Interpretation ſeems to be a little too *metaphorical* and forc'd, for which Reaſon we have rather choſen the Conſtruction which *Joſephus* (lib. vii. c. 2.) puts upon this Paſſage, *viz.* that they imagin'd their Fortreſs to be ſo impregnable, that, by Way of Contempt, they told *David*, that their very *Blind* and *Lame* would be able to defend it againſt him and all his Forces: And this is a Senſe ſo extremely plain and obvious, that the renown'd *Bochart* wonders, why any Man of Learning ſhould ſeek for any other. The only Exception to it is, that theſe *Blind* and *Lame* (which were rather Objects of Compaſſion) are ſaid to have been *extremely hated by* David. But we may obſerve, that *David* here retorts the *Sarcaſm* upon them; *The Lame and Blind*, i. e. thoſe who are ſet to defend the Place, and who, as they pretended, were to be only the *Lame* and the *Blind*. And theſe were hateful to *David*, becauſe they had wickedly and inſolently defy'd the Armies of the living God. *Pool*'s Annotations, *Patrick*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries.

† *Abibalus* was his primitive Name, but, before he enter'd into a League of Amity with *David*, he chang'd it to *Hiram*, that ſo it might be the ſtanding Name of him and his *Succeſſors*, as *Pharaoh*, and after that *Ptolemy* in *Egypt*, *Abimelech* among the *Philiſtines*, and *Cæſar* among the *Roman* Emperors. The Name, in their Languge, ſignifies, *he lives that is exalted*; or, *let him live who is exalted*. i. e. *Let the King live for ever*; and his ſending to *David* only under this Name, is the true Reaſon why no other Name is mention'd in Scripture. *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 4.

† It cannot well be ſuppos'd, that the *Philiſtines*, out of their ſmall Territories, could produce ſuch vaſt Numbers of Men as they brought againſt the *Iſraelites*; and therefore the Remark, which *Joſephus* makes, helps to explain this Matter, *viz. that* Syria *and* Phœnicia, *as well as ſeveral other warlike Nations, were engaged in this Confederacy*: But this cannot be meant of *Hiram*, who was in a League of the ſtricteſt Amity with *David*, but of ſuch *Phœnicians* only as would not ſubmit to him, and therefore join'd with the *Philiſtines*, firſt to ſubdue his *Ally*, and then to ſubdue him, before his Government could be ſettled. *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 4.

Dominichin pinx.

Scotin sculp.

David dancing before the Ark.

David went and brought up the Ark of God from the House of Obed-Edom into the City of David. with gladness - and David danced before the Lord with all his might - girded with a linnen Ephod. II. Sam. VI. 10. 14.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

And brings home the Ark to Jeruſalem, *but is not allow'd to build the Temple.*

feat, that, for many Years after, they never pretended to give *Iſrael* any more Diſturbance.

THIS Time of Reſt and publick Security *David* thought a proper Seaſon, wherein to bring home the Ark of God (which for almoſt fifty Years had continu'd in the Houſe of *Abinadab)* into a Place which he had prepar'd for it in his own City. To this Purpoſe, attended with the † *principal* Men of the Nation, and the chief Officers of his Court, together with a ſtrong Guard for the Convoy of the Ark, in caſe any Enemy ſhould attempt to ſurpriſe them, he came to *Kirjath-jearim*: But, either through Inadvertency, or Neglect of the *(a)* Divine Law, which oblig'd them to carry it upon Men's Shoulders, they, in Imitation of the *Philiſtines*, put it in a *Cart*, and when the Cart had like to have been overturn'd, *Uzzah*, who was one of its Drivers, taking hold of the Ark to prevent its falling, was immediately ſtruck dead upon the Spot; ſo that *David*, terrify'd at this Judgment, durſt not at that Time carry it into *Jeruſalem*, but left it near the City, in the Houſe of *Obed-Edom*, a *Levite*, whom God bleſſed with a large Increaſe of all his Subſtance, for the little Time that it continu'd with him. In the Space of three Months, the King recollecting that none were to carry the Ark, but the *Levites*, tho' they themſelves were expreſly forbidden *(b) to touch it*, he adventur'd to remove it from *Obed-Edom*'s, which he did in great Form and Solemnity. The *Levites*, who were to bear the Ark on their Shoulders, he caus'd to be *ſanctify'd*; Himſelf, cloath'd in a *Linnen Ephod*, and † dancing before it, brought it into a convenient Place, which he had prepar'd for it; offer'd a great Quantity of * Sacrifices upon this Occaſion; and, with the reſt of the Company that attended this Solemnity, feaſted and rejoic'd. From 2 Sam.

† HIS

† It is ſuppos'd by ſome, that this bringing back of the Ark was appointed to be one of the three great *Feſtivals*; and the Reaſon, why *David* might ſummon ſo many of his principal Miniſters and Officers to accompany him in the Expedition, might be, to poſſeſs the young People, who perhaps had heard little or nothing of the Ark, by Reaſon of its having been abſent ſo long, with a mighty Veneration for it, when they ſaw the King and ſo many of the chief Nobility waiting on it, with ſuch a Variety of Muſick, and ſuch publick Declarations of Joy. *Millar*'s Hiſtory of the Church.

(a) Numb. iv. 15. *(b)* Numb. iv. 15. and xviii. 3.

† *Strabo* tells us, that it was cuſtomary among the *Greeks*, as well as other Nations, to uſe Muſick and Dancing in the Proceſſions before their Gods, lib. x. *Callimachus* mentions the *Chori*, and Dancings of the Youth at the Altar of *Apollo*; *Plato* obſerves, that, among the *Egyptians*, all Kinds of Muſick, Songs, and Dances, were conſecrated to their Gods, *De Legibus*, lib. iii. And even *Lucian (de Saltatione)* expreſly ſays, that, among the Ancients, no Ceremonial of Religion, no Expiation, no Atonement was accounted rightly accompliſh'd without Dancing. So that *David* was far from being *ſingular* in his Behaviour upon this Occaſion; nor was his Behaviour in this Particular any Diſparagement to his *Regal* Dignity. His *Dancing*, i. e. his moving in certain ſerious and ſolemn Meaſures, ſuited to Muſick of the ſame Character and Tendency, was an Exerciſe highly conducive to the Purpoſes of Piety, and his mixing with the publick Feſtivities of his People, was a Condeſcenſion (as *Tacitus* relates of *Auguſtus* the *Roman* Emperor) not unbecoming the greateſt Monarch. *Policy* taught *Auguſtus* to put himſelf upon a Level with his Subjects, in their publick Rejoicings; *Piety* taught *David*, that all Men are upon a Level in the Solemnities of Religion. So that *David* was not ſingular in his Behaviour upon this Occaſion. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*. Vol. II.

* The Words in the Text are, ——— *And it was ſo, that, when they, that bare the Ark of the Lord, had gone ſix Paces, he ſacrificed Oxen and Fatlings*, 2 Sam. vi. 13. From which Words ſome would infer, that *David*, having meaſur'd the Ground between *Obed-Edom*'s Houſe, and the Place he had built for the Reception of the Ark, had Altars rais'd, at the Diſtance of every *ſix Paces*, whereon he caus'd Sacrifices to be offer'd, as the Ark paſs'd by. But it is eaſy to imagine, what a World of Confuſion this would create in the Proceſſion; and therefore the more rational Conſtruction is, that, after thoſe, who carry'd the Ark, had advanc'd ſix Paces, without any ſuch Token of Divine Wrath as *Uzzah* had undergone, then did they offer a Sacrifice of Thankſgiving to God, which might conſiſt of ſeveral living Creatures, all ſacrificed and offer'd up at once. But even ſuppoſing, that, at ſet Diſtances, there were Sacrifices all along the Way that they went; yet we are to know, that it was no unuſual Thing for *Heathens* to confer on their Gods, nay, even upon their Emperors, the ſame Honours, that we find *David* here beſtowing upon the Ark of the God of *Iſrael*. For in this Manner (as *Suetonius* tells us) was *Otho* receiv'd, *cum per omne Iter, dextrâ ſiniſtrâque, oppidatim Victimæ cæderentur*: And the like he relates of *Caligula*: *Ut a Miſeno movit, inter Altaria, & Victimas, ardenteſque tædas, denſiſſimo obviorum agmine inceſſit*. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

† His Wife *Michal*, who was *Saul*'s Daughter, and proud perhaps upon Account of her Pedigree, † upbraided him, upon this Occaſion, with his Humility, as a Diminution of his *regal* Dignity; but he, in Reply to the *ſarcaſtick* Manner wherein ſhe ſpake it, only told her, "That "what he had done was in Honour of "that God, who had choſen him to go- "vern *Iſrael*, rather than any of her Fa- "mily; and that ſuch Condeſcenſions as "theſe, would never bring him under any "juſt Contempt."

By this Time, the Palace, which *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*, had furniſh'd *David* with Men and Materials to build, was finiſh'd; and, as he was reflecting upon the Meanneſs of God's Habitation in Compariſon of his own, it came into his Mind to build a noble Fabrick for his religious Worſhip, which Deſign he communicated to † *Nathan*. *Nathan*, at firſt, approv'd of it; but, the Night following, he was commanded to forbid it, with this Aſſurance, that God accepted of his ſincere Intentions; promis'd that his Son ſhould ſucceed him, and build him a Temple; and that his Poſterity ſhould reign † for many Generations. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

DAVID was a Man of War, and therefore, ſince God had refus'd him the Privilege of building him a Temple, and had reſerv'd that Work for his Son *Solomon* (whoſe Name denotes *peaceable*) to execute, he thought himſelf bound to ſubdue all his Enemies on every Side, that, when his Son came to undertake that great Affair, he might meet with as little Moleſtation as poſſible. *His Victories abroad.*

In the Beginning of his Reign, the *Philiſtines* had twice invaded him, and therefore he began with them. Their royal City of *Gath*, which was call'd *Metheg-Ammah*, or the *Bridge of Ammah*, (becauſe it ſtood upon an Hill of that Name, and was a *Bridle* to curb the Tribe of

† After that, *David* was by *Saul* baniſh'd from Court, and forc'd to ſeek for Shelter in foreign Countries: *Saul*, to caſt the more Contempt upon him, gave his Wife away to one *Phalti*, (or *Phaltiel*) Son of *Laiſh* of *Gallim*; but *David*, when he came to the Crown of *Judah*, had her reſtor'd to him again; for which Purpoſe, he ſent Meſſengers to *Iſhboſheth*, who then reign'd over the *Eleven* Tribes at *Mahanaim*, to demand her, and who, according to that Demand, took her from *Phaltiel*, and ſent her back to *David*. The *Hebrews* pretend that *Phaltiel* never came near *Michal*, who, in Strictneſs, could not be his Wife, becauſe ſhe had never been divorc'd by *David*; but others believe, that ſhe had five Sons by *Phaltiel*, which were given up to the *Gibeonites* to be executed, as is related, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 8, 9. But, in this Place, there ſeems to be an Error crept into the Text, which ſhould be read *Merob*, inſtead of *Michal*. *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Michal*.

† The Words of *Michal*, wherein ſhe upbraids *David*, are theſe:——— *How glorious was the King of* Iſrael *To-Day, who uncovereth himſelf To-Day, in the Eyes of the Handmaids of his Servants, as one of the vain Fellows ſhamefully uncovereth himſelf!* 2 Sam. vi. 20. At firſt Reading, they ſeem to intimate, that *David*, in his Dancing, had expos'd his naked Body, and acted, ſome Way, or other, immodeſtly: But theſe Words, we are to conſider, were ſpoken in a Fit of Paſſion, and when *Michal* was minded to aggravate Matters; for it is not to be doubted, but that *David* kept himſelf within the Bounds of Modeſty, how joyous ſoever he might be. It was a Command which God gave the *Iſraelites*, that they ſhould rejoice in their Feaſts, *Deut.* xii. 7. but then their Joy was not to be laſcivious or petulant, but pious and moderate. In the Caſe before us, *David* was in the more immediate Preſence of God, and about a very ſacred Buſineſs; and therefore it is incongruous to think, that he would commit any Thing immodeſt: And, that he could not expoſe his Nakedneſs (as his Wife would inſinuate) is evident from his having, not only an *Ephod* on, but *being cloathed with a Robe of fine Linnen*, beſides his uſual Under garments, 1 *Chron.* xv. 27. and therefore, tho' his putting off his *Regal* Robes might give ſome Occaſion to *Michal*'s Expreſſion of his *uncovering himſelf*, yet it muſt be own'd, that this opprobrious Term proceeded from nothing, but the overflowing Spleen of a proud paſſionate Woman. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

† At what Time this Prophet began to appear in *Iſrael*, we are no where inform'd. This is the firſt Time, that the Scripture makes mention of him. He was a Man of great Temper, Prudence, and fine Addreſs, who knew how to mitigate the Rigour of his Reproofs with a great deal of Sweetneſs and Wiſdom, which qualify'd him ſo well for the Converſation of Kings, and other great Perſons. He was always equally eſteem'd, and belov'd by *David*, and, in his Conduct towards him, maintain'd a juſt Medium, between an inflexible Auſterity, and a ſervile Flattery. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† The Words in the Text are, ——— *I will eſtabliſh the Throne of his Kingdom for ever*; which, in their primary Senſe, do relate to the terreſtrial Kingdom of *David*'s Family, and the long Duration of it, enough to juſtify the Expreſſion *for ever*, taken in a leſs ſtrict Signification: But if we take it in a more ſublime and abſolute Senſe, it can belong to none, but that Son of *David*, to whom God the Father gave an *eternal* Kingdom (properly ſo called) over all Things both in Heaven and Earth, which, tho' it was not ſo well known in the Times, when this Prophecy was utter'd, was, by the Event afterwards, made plain and evident. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

of *Judah*, and keep them in Obedience) he took, and made it a Barrier againſt themſelves. The *Moabites* he utterly ſubdu'd; and, having diſmantled all their ſtrong Places, he † ſlew the greater Part of them, reſerving ſuch only, as were requiſite to till the Ground. From hence he march'd his Army to ſecure his Territories, which border'd upon the *Euphrates*. The *Syrians* of *Zobah*, under the Command of † *Hadadezer*, came with a ſtrong Force, and gave him Battle; but he ſoon routed them, and, beſides a great Number of Foot-Priſoners, took a *thouſand Chariots, and ſeven thouſand Horſemen* that attended them; but, reſerving to himſelf no more Horſes, than were neceſſary for an hundred Chariots, the reſt he *hamſtring'd*, to make them unſerviceable for War. † The *Syrians* of *Damaſcus*, hearing of *Hadadezer*'s ill Succeſs, came to his Aſſiſtance: But *David* put them to the Rout likewiſe, and, having ſlain two and twenty Thouſand of them, he became Maſter of their Country; put Garriſons into their fortify'd Cities, and made them *Tributary*; and (what was another Victory in this Expedition) in his Return from *Syria*, he engaged a great Body of *Edomites* † in the *Valley of Salt*; ſlew eighteen Thouſand of them, and brought them under the like Subjection. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

THUS loaded with Honours and Spoils *David* return'd from this Campaign; but all the rich Materials, that he had compil'd together, *viz.* Gold, Silver, and Braſs, he dedicated to the Lord, or laid them up for the future Uſe of the Temple: And (what was no ſmall Addition to his Store) *Toi*, the King of *Hamah*, hearing of his Victories, ſent his own Son to congratulate him thereupon, and, in a large Preſent of Veſſels of Gold, and Veſſels of Silver, *&c.* to acknowledge his Kindneſs in breaking

† There is no ſmall Obſurity in the Words of the Text, which are theſe: ——— *He ſmote* Moab, *and meaſured them with a Line, caſting them down to the Ground; even in two Lines meaſured he to put to Death, and with one Line to keep alive:* Which Words ſeem to allude to a Cuſtom among the Kings of the *Eaſt*, when they were thoroughly incens'd againſt any Nation, *viz.* to make the Captives all come together in one Place, and proſtrate themſelves upon the Ground; that, being divided into two Parts, as it were with a Line, their Conqueror might appoint which Part he pleas'd, either for Death or Life, which was ſometimes determin'd by caſting of Lots. Some are of Opinion that *David* made three Lots, or Parts of theſe *Moabites*, two of which he order'd to be ſlain, and one Part only to be kept alive. The Reaſon of this his Severity againſt theſe miſerable People, the *Rabbins* aſſure us, was, becauſe they had ſlain his Parents, and Brethren, whom he had committed to the Cuſtody of the King of *Moab*, during his Exile. But of the Reality of this *Motive* there is no Manner of Appearance; and ſince this Execution, which *David* inflicted, may relate either to the whole Nation, or the Army only, to clear *David* from the Imputation of too much Cruelty, we ſhould rather conceive it of the Third, or Half Part at moſt of the Army. *Le Clerc*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† In the Fragment of *Nicholaus Damaſcenus*, which *Joſephus* has preſerv'd, this Prince is ſimply called *Adad*, which was the common Name of the Kings of *Syria*, who, according to the Manner of other *eaſtern* Princes, took their Titles from the *celeſtial* Bodies, and, in their Language, *Adad* ſignifies the *Sun*. The Fragment, recorded by *Joſephus*, is to this Effect: ——— *A long Time after, one* Adad, *a valiant Man, and a Native of the Place, had the Command of* Damaſcus *and* Syria, Phœnicia *only excepted. There happened to be a War between the ſame* Adad, *and* David, *the King of the* Jews, *and ſeveral Encounters between them; but, in the End,* Adad *was overcome at* Euphrates, *behaving himſelf* with the Reſolution of a brave Prince, *and a great Captain.* The ſame Author, ſpeaking farther of his Poſterity, ſays, ——— *That the Government was handed down, from Father to Son, to the Tenth Generation, and that the Succeſſor ſtill received the Father's Name with the Empire, as the* Ptolemies *did among the* Egyptians. *Jewiſh* Antiq. Lib. vii. c. 6.

† *Aram Damaſek*, which we tranſlate *Syria of Damaſcus*, was that Part of *Syria*, which lay between *Libanus* and *Antilibanus*, whoſe chief City was *Damaſcus*, ſituate in a Valley, called by ſeveral Names in Scripture, and water'd by five Rivers, the two Principal of which, *viz. Abana and Parphar* (mention'd in 2 *Kings* v. 12.) deſcended from Mount *Herman*; whereof the latter waſh'd the Walls of *Damaſcus*, and the other ran through it, and divided the City into two Parts. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† *The Valley of Salt* here is thought by many to be the Place adjoining to the *Dead Sea*: But, as the Country of the *Edomites*, whom *David* ſubdu'd in his Return from his Expedition into *Syria*, muſt neceſſarily lie towards the *Eaſt of Canaan*, we muſt look for ſome other *Valley of Salt* in the Confines of that Country. Now, about a League ſouthward from the City of *Palmyra*, or *Thadmor*, in the Road to *Edom*, we find a large Plain, abounding with Salt-pits, whence a great Part of *Syria* is furniſh'd with that Commodity; and therefore 'tis very probable, that the Battle between *David*'s Generals, and the *Edomites*, was fought in this Plain; which is about two Days Journey from *Bozrah*, the capital City of the *eaſtern Edom*, whence the People might march out to meet *David*'s Forces, and oppoſe them in their Return home. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1055, &c.

And chief Miniſters at home.

ing the Power of his moſt inveterate Enemies.

All the while that *David* was thus engag'd in *foreign* Wars, he took Care to have Juſtice adminiſter'd to his Subjects at *home*, and had a certain Number of very great Men employ'd in the higheſt Offices of Truſt. *Joab* (as we ſaid before) was *Captain-General*; *Jehoſaphat* † *Chancellor* of the Kingdom; *Abiathar* was *High-Prieſt*; *Sezaiah*, Secretary of State; *Benaiah*, † Captain of his Guard; and his own Sons, the *prime* Miniſters of his Houſhold, ſuch as Lord *Chamberlain*, Lord *Treaſurer*, Lord *Steward*, as we call them; and to theſe he added one more, *Mephiboſheth*, the Son of *Jonathan*, to whom he reſtor'd all his Grandfather *Saul*'s Eſtate; and, tho' he was a Cripple, † and lame of both his Feet, yet, (for the Love he had for his Father) he entertain'd him with great Kindneſs, and order'd him to ſit with his own Sons at the *royal* Table every Day. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

His ſubduing the Ammonites, *and their Confederates.*

DAVID, not long after this, hearing that his † old Friend *Nahaſh* was dead, ſent his Compliments of Condolence to his Son and Succeſſor *Hanun*; but the great Men that were about the young King, made him believe, that the ſole Intent of *David*'s ſending this Embaſſy was to ſpy out the Weakneſs of the City, and in what Place it might moſt advantageouſly be aſſaulted: So that the too credulous Prince order'd the Ambaſſadors to be treated in the moſt ignominious Manner, and, with * their Beards half-ſhav'd, and their Cloths cut ſhort even to the Middle of * their

† The Word, in our Tranſlation, is *Recorder*, which, in the *Marginal* Note, is *Remembrancer*, or *Writer of Chronicles*; an Employment of no mean Eſtimation in the *Eaſtern* World, where it was cuſtomary with Kings to keep daily Regiſters of all the Tranſactions of their Reigns; and a Truſt, which whoever diſcharg'd to Purpoſe, muſt be let into the true Springs and Secrets of Action, and, conſequently, muſt be receiv'd into the inmoſt Confidence. For whether the Office of a *Lord Chancellor* was conſiſtent with the Conſtitution of the *Jewiſh* State, a modern Author ſeems to doubt. Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

† Theſe Guards are called in the Text the *Cerethites, and the Pelethites*, but who they were, is variouſly conjectur'd. That they were Soldiers, is evident, from their being mention'd as preſent at the Proclamation of King *Solomon* againſt *Adonijah*, which could not conveniently have been done without ſome arm'd Force, to protect the Perſons that proclaim'd him: And that they were not common Soldiers, but the conſtant Guards of *David*'s Perſon, is manifeſt from the Title of Σωματοφύλακες, *Keepers of the Body*, which *Joſephus* gives them. Some are of Opinion, that they were Men of a *gigantick* Stature; but we find no Ground for that, tho' they were doubtleſs proper and robuſt Men, (as we ſpeak) and of known Fidelity to their Prince, 2 *Sam.* xv. 18. and xx. 7. Others again think, that they were *Philiſtines*; but it is hardly ſuppoſeable, that *David* would have any of theſe hated, uncircumcis'd People to be his Body-Guard; neither can we believe, that the *Iſraelitiſh* Soldiers would have took it patiently, to ſee Foreigners of that Nation put in ſuch Places of Honour and Truſt. *Cherethite* however is certainly but another Name for *Philiſtine*, as appears from *Zephaniah* ii. 5. and therefore the Queſtion is, how came any of *David*'s Subjects to be call'd after that Name? And the Anſwer to this is obvious. ——— They were ſo called, becauſe they went at firſt with him into *Philiſtia*, and continu'd there with him all the Time, that he was under the Protection of *Achiſh*. Theſe were the Perſons, who accompany'd him from the Beginning, in his utmoſt Diſtreſs, and clave to him in all Calamities; and therefore it is no Wonder, if Men of ſuch approv'd Fidelity were made Choice of for his *Body-Guard*; nor is it any uncommon Thing in Hiſtory, for *Legions*, or Bands of Soldiers, to take their Names, not from the Place of their *Nativity*, but their *Reſidence*, and very frequently from the Name of their Captain, or Commander. Since therefore, in 1 *Chron.* xii. 3, we find mention made of one *Pelet*, the Son of *Azmaveth*, who reſorted to *David*, while he was at *Ziklag*, but ſtill under the Protection of *Achiſh*; 'tis but ſuppoſing him to be their Captain, and then we come to the Reaſon, why they were call'd *Pelethites*, unleſs we ſuppoſe them rather denominated from *Peleth*, Son of *Jonathan*, who was of the King's own *Tribe*. *Patrick*'s Commentary, *Pool*'s Annotations, and The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*.

† *Mephiboſheth* was very young, when his Father *Jonathan* was killed at the Battle of *Gilboa*, which put his Nurſe into ſo great a Conſternation, that ſhe let the Child fall, as ſhe was making haſte to eſcape with him, and from that Time, he was lame of both Feet ever after, 2 *Sam.* iv. 4.

† What the particular Benefits which *David* had receiv'd from *Nahaſh* were, we are no where told in Scripture; but ſome of the *Jews* ſay, that he fled to him, when he durſt ſtay no longer with *Achiſh* King of the *Philiſtines*, and that he receiv'd him very kindly; others, that he entertain'd his Relations, when the King of *Moab*, to whom he had committed them, ſlew ſome of them: But the moſt likely Opinion is, that, as he was a bitter Enemy to *Saul*, who had given him a great Overthrow, he, for that very Reaſon, became a Friend to *David*, when he perceiv'd how *Saul* perſecuted him, and thereupon might ſend him Relief and Aſſiſtance, and perhaps offer him Protection in his Kingdom. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* This was one of the greateſt Indignities that the Malice of Man could invent, in thoſe Countries, where all

A. M. 2910, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

their Buttocks, to be ſent about their Buſineſs.

THE Ambaſſadors, being aſham'd to return home, were order'd to continue at *Jericho*, until their Beards grew again; but, as for the Indignity put upon them, *David* gave them Aſſurance, that he would reſent it in a proper Manner. Accordingly he ſent an Army under the Command of *Joab*, to call theſe unhoſpitable *Ammonites* to an Account. The *Ammonites* were appriz'd of his Deſign, and therefore provided againſt the worſt, by procuring three and thirty thouſand *Mercenaries* of the *Syrians*, who lay encamp'd at ſome Diſtance in the Fields, whilſt their own Forces cover'd the City.

UPON this Situation of the Enemy, *Joab* divided his Army into two Bodies, one of which he gave to his Brother *Abiſhai*, to keep the *Ammonites in Play*, while himſelf with the other, which conſiſted of his choice Men, attack'd the *Syrians*. Their Agreement was to relieve each other, in caſe there was Occaſion: But *Joab*, at the firſt Onſet, charg'd the *Syrians* ſo home, that, as they were but *Mercenaries*, and thought not the Cauſe their own, they ſoon gave Way, which made the *Ammonites*, who depended much upon their Courage, endeavour to ſecure themſelves by retreating into their City; for the Seaſon of the Year being too far advanc'd, made it impracticable for *Joab* to beſiege it.

HADADEZER had aſſiſted the *Ammonites* with ſome Forces the laſt Campaign; and being apprehenſive, that *David* would fall foul upon him, he reſolv'd to be beforehand with him. To this Purpoſe levying a vaſt Army, not only in *Syria*, but in *Meſopotamia* likewiſe, he ſent it, under the Command of *Shobach* his General over the River *Euphrates*, as far as *Helam*, a Town in the Borders of the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*. This *David* had ſoon Intelligence of, and therefore uniting all his Forces, he march'd with the utmoſt Expedition, and coming upon the Enemy ſooner than was expected, ſlew ſeven thouſand Men, who attended ſeven hundred Chariots; which ſo diſhearten'd the reſt, that he ſoon diſpatch'd forty Thouſand more, together with their *General*, who fell in the Action, and died upon the Spot. Upon this Succeſs, ſeveral *petty* Kings, who had aſſiſted *Hadadezer* in this Expedition, fearing ſome worſe Conſequences, made a Peace with *David*, and became Tributary to him; and even *Hadadezer* himſelf, being thus forſaken by his Confederates, gave him Aſſurance that he would no longer eſpouſe the Cauſe of the *Ammonites*, but leave them to ſhift for themſelves: Whereupon *David* ſent *Joab* againſt them with a powerful Army, who laid the Country waſte, deſtroy'd all that came in his Way, and (to make ſhort of the Matter) laid Siege to their royal City of *Rabbah*.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

WHILE *Joab* was carrying on the Siege of *Rabbah*, *David* continu'd in *Jeruſalem*, and walking one Evening † on the Top of

His falling in Love with Bathſheba, *and murthering her Huſband* Uriah.

People thought their Hair ſo great an Ornament, that ſome would have rather ſubmitted to die, than part with it. What a foul Diſgrace, and heavy Puniſhment, this was accounted in antient Times, we may learn from *Nicholaus Damaſcenus*, as mention'd by *Stobæus* (Tit. 42.) who ſays, that, among the *Indians*, the King commanded the greateſt Offenders to be *ſhaven*, as the heavieſt Puniſhment that he could inflict upon them; and, to the like Purpoſe, *Plutarch* (in *Ageſil.*) tells us, that, whenever a Soldier, among the *Lacedemonians*, was convicted of *Cowardice*, he was oblig'd to go with one Part of his upper Lip ſhav'd, and the other not. Nay, even at this Day, no greater Indignity can be offer'd to a Man of *Perſia*, than to cauſe his Beard to be ſhav'd; and therefore, *Tavernier*, in his Travels, relates the Story, that when the *Sophi* caus'd an Ambaſſador of *Aureng-zeb*'s to be us'd in this Manner, telling him, that he was not worthy to wear a Beard, the Emperor (even in the Manner as *David* here did) moſt highly reſented the Affront, that was done to him in the Perſon of his Ambaſſador. And, as ſhaving *David*'s Ambaſſadors was deſervedly accounted a grievous Affront, ſo the cutting off half the Beard (which made them look ſtill more ridiculous) was a great Addition to it, where Beards were held in great Veneration; and, where long Habits down to the Heels were worn (eſpecially by Perſons of Diſtinction) without any Breeches or Drawers, the cutting their Garments, even to the Middle, thereby to expoſe their *Nakedneſs*, was ſuch a brutal and ſhameleſs Inſult, as would badly become a Man of *David*'s martial Spirit, and juſt Sentiments of Honour, to have tamely paſs'd by. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† The Manner of Building, in all *eaſtern* Countries, was to have their Houſes *flat-roof'd*, with a *Terraſs*, and *Paraſet*

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1055, &c.

of his *Palace* to take the freſh Air, he chanc'd to * eſpy a beauteous Woman bathing herſelf in her Garden. The unguarded King, as ſoon as he ſaw her, was ſmitten; and, enquiring who ſhe was, was inform'd, that ſhe was *Bathſheba*, the Daughter of *Ammiel*, and Wife of *Uriah* † the *Hittite*, an Officer in his Army, who was then with *Joab* at the Siege of *Rabbah*. *David* ſent for her, lay with her, and diſmiſs'd her: But in a ſhort Time, finding herſelf with Child, ſhe appriz'd him of it, and deſir'd him withal to conſult her Honour and Safety in deviſing ſome Means to conceal it. Hereupon he ſent a Diſpatch to *Joab* for *Uriah* to come to him, as if he had ſomething particular to enquire of him; but his whole Intent was to give him an Opportunity of lying with his Wife, that ſo the Child, when it was born, might be reputed his. *Uriah* came; and after the King had aſk'd him ſome few Queſtions concerning the Condition of the Army, and the Advances of the Siege, he order'd him to go home, † and refreſh himſelf after his Journey, and ſent an handſome *Collation* after him for his Entertainment: But ſo it was, that, inſtead of going near his Wife, he choſe to ſleep in the *Guard-Room*. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

DAVID was inform'd of this the next Morning; and was therefore reſolv'd to make uſe of another Expedient. He invited him to ſup at his own Table, and prevail'd with him to drink to ſuch a Pitch, that he did not doubt but that the *Heat* of the Liquor would have inflam'd his *Appetite*, and made him go home to his Wife; but ſtill he lay in the *Guard-Room*, and, in Excuſe to the King, ſaid, that he thought it was his Duty ſo to do, while the reſt of the Soldiers were encamp'd: So that, finding himſelf ſtill diſappointed, the King order'd him at laſt back to the Army, and * ſent with him Letters

Parapet Wall, for the Convenience of walking in the cool Air; and, as *David*'s Palace was built on one of the higheſt Places of Mount *Sion*, he might eaſily look down upon the lower Parts of the Town, and take a View of all the Gardens, that were within a due Diſtance. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

* Thus *Jupiter* is ſaid to have ſeen *Proſerpina* waſhing herſelf, and expoſing her whole Body to his View, which inflam'd his Luſt after her:

Δερομένης ὅλον εἶδος ἰδέρετο Περσεφονείης.

But whether it was in her Garden, or Court-Yard, overlook'd by the Palace, or in ſome Apartment in her Houſe, whoſe Windows open'd that Way, that this Woman bath'd herſelf, is not ſo certain. Tradition points out the Place of a Fountain ſtill called after her Name, which would make it probable, that ſhe bath'd in a Garden, did not *Joſephus* expreſsly declare, that it was in her own Houſe, as indeed the natural Modeſty and Decency of her Sex, as well as the Circumſtance of the Time (for then it was *Evening*) make his Account more probable; nor can it be doubted, but that the declining Rays of the Sun, ſhooting into the inmoſt Receſſes of her Chamber, and throwing a great Luſtre around her, might diſcover her very clearly to very diſtant Eyes, without the leaſt Suſpicion, on her Part, of any Poſſibility of being ſeen, and, conſequently, with all the Reſerve of Modeſty proper to her Sex. The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III.

† *Uriah*, though an *Hittite* by Nation, was *proſelyted* to the *Jewiſh* Religion, and ſo, marrying with a *Jewiſh* Woman, liv'd in *Jeruſalem*; or, as he was one of the King's *Life-Guard*, which, for Reaſons above mention'd, ſeem to have been all *Natives*, and of the Tribe of *Judah*, this additional Name might perhaps be given him, for ſome gallant Action atchiev'd againſt the *Hittites*, in the ſame Manner as a *Roman*, in After-Ages, came to be called *Africanus*, *Germanicus*, *Parthicus*, &c. upon Account of Victories obtain'd over the *Africans*, *Germans*, or *Parthians*. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† The Words in the Text are,——*Go down to thy Houſe, and Waſh thy Feet*, 2 Sam. xi. 8. for in theſe Countries, where it was not the Cuſtom to wear Shoes, but *Sandals* only, and, in ſome Places, to go *bare-foot*, waſhing the Feet was a great Refreſhment after a Journey, and a common Compliment, that the Maſter of the Houſe uſually made to any Stranger at his firſt Entrance. But this Cuſtom of waſhing the Feet was not only, after a Journey, to cleanſe them from Dirt and Duſt, but very much us'd likewiſe, before People ſet down to Meat; and therefore *David*'s Meaning in the Expreſſion, is, that *Uriah* ſhould go down, and feaſt with his Wife (for which Reaſon he ſent a *Collation* to his Houſe) and, after ſo long an Abſence, indulge himſelf in her Company. For *David*'s Intention hitherto was, neither to murder *Uriah*, nor marry his Wife, but only to ſkreen her Honour, and his own Crime. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* It may be thought perhaps, that *Uriah* ſuſpected ſomething of his Wife's Adultery, and therefore, reſolving that it ſhould be diſcover'd, would not be perſuaded to go down to his Houſe: But if he did, he certainly acted the Part of a truſty Servant, when he would not open the King's Letter to know what was in it, though, upon Suppoſition that he ſuſpected his *criminal Commerce* with his Wife, he had Reaſon to expect no Good. This puts one

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And the Woman was very beautiful to look upon. — And David sent & enquir'd after her & one said is not this Bathsheba. — And David sent Messengers & took her & she came in unto him & he lay with her. 2d B. Sam. 11 Ch. V. 2. 3. 4. —

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A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

Letters to *Joab*, wherein he commanded him to manage Matters ſo, that *Uriah* might be kill'd by the *Ammonites*, which accordingly came to paſs: For, in an Aſſault upon the Town, *Uriah*, being deſerted by the other Soldiers, who had private Orders to retire when the Onſet began, * fell immediately by the Enemies Sword.

His taking of Rabbah, *and cruelly uſing it.*

As ſoon as *Uriah* was dead, *Joab* ſent an Expreſs thereof to the King, who return'd him Orders to carry on the Siege with more Vigour, until he had made himſelf Maſter of it; and then to raze it even with the Ground, and to put all the Inhabitants to the Sword, without ſparing ſo much as one Man. Upon this Order, *Joab* advanc'd his Approaches, and renew'd his Aſſaults every Day, until he had got Poſſeſſion of * the *Water-Works*, which ſupply'd the Town; and then ſent a Courier to acquaint the King, that the City was reduc'd to the utmoſt Extremity; was in no Condition to hold out much longer, and therefore he deſir'd him to come *in Perſon*, that he might have the Honour of taking it. The King, according to his *General*'s Deſire, went with a ſtrong Re-inforcement, took the Place by Storm, gave the Plunder of it to his Soldiers, but reſerv'd to himſelf what belong'd to the King, among which was the Crown of ineſtimable Value. Having thus waſted the City, and divided the Spoil, he put the Men, who had held it out againſt him, to the moſt exquiſite Torments; and other Places, that would not immediately ſurrender, he treated with the ſame Severity.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

Nathan *reproves him, and threatens God's Puniſhments upon him for his Sins, which accordingly were executed.*

UPON the Death of *Uriah*, his Wife * *Bathſheba* pretended to mourn for him; but

naturally in Mind of the Story of *Bellerophon*'s carrying Letters from *Prætus* to his Father-in-Law *Jobates*, King of *Lycia*, with an Order to kill him; from whom it came into a Proverb, *to carry* Bellerophon's *Letters*, or a *Death-Warrant* againſt one's ſelf, according to that Paſſage in *Plautus*:

Aha! *Bellerophontem* jam tuus me fecit Filius,
Egomet Tabellas detuli ut vincirer. *Bacchid.*

For the Fate of *Uriah* and *Bellerophon* are ſo very much alike, that the Fable of the *latter* ſeems to be founded upon the Story of the *former*. *Bellerophon*, who, as ſome *Scholiaſts* think, ſhould be read *Boulepheron* (a Council-Carrier) was a Stranger at the Court of *Prætus*, as *Uriah* (being an *Hittite*) was at the Court of *David*. He declin'd the Embraces of *Sthenobæa*, as *Uriah* did the Bed of *Bathſheba*; and was, for that Reaſon, ſent to *Jobates*, General of *Prætus*'s Army, with Letters, which contain'd a Direction to put him to Death, as *Uriah* was ſent to *Joab*, *David*'s General. By *Jobates* he was ſent, with a ſmall Guard, upon an Attack, in which it was intended he ſhould be ſlain, as *Uriah* was by *Joab*, to that, in which he fell. The main of the Hiſtory is the ſame in both; the Similitude of *Jobates* and *Joab*'s Name is very remarkable; and the Variation in the whole only lies in ſome ſuch *Ornamental* Embelliſhments, as might well be expected in a *Poetical* Compoſition. *Calmet*'s Commentary, and the Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*.

* The Fate and Fall of the gallant *Uriah* is thus related by *Joſephus*: —— "*Joab* put *Uriah* upon a deſperate "*Forlorn*, and, to cover his Deſign, gave him ſeveral brave Men to back him, with a Promiſe to ſupport him with "the whole Army, in Caſe there was any Poſſibility of entering the Town; and, at the ſame Time, recommended "it earneſtly to him, to maintain the Reputation he had already acquir'd with the King and the Army, by acquitting "himſelf gallantly upon this Occaſion. *Uriah*, with great Chearfulneſs, undertook the Poſt, while *Joab* gave his Com-"panions private Orders to withdraw, and leave him, as ſoon as they found themſelves in Danger. The *Hebrews* preſs'd "hard upon the Wall, and put the *Ammonites* under a dreadful Apprehenſion, that they would force the Town; where-"upon the *Beſieg'd* threw open their Gates, and made a deſperate Sally, which was as good as a Signal to thoſe, that were "with *Uriah*, to abandon him; which accordingly they did, and left him to be cut to Pieces. He did all the Execution, "that was poſſible to be done by one ſingle Man againſt Numbers, and, after ſeveral Wounds receiv'd, fell, like a Man "of Honour, with his Face to the Enemy." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 7.

* Some learned Men are of Opinion, that this royal City of *Rabbah* was likewiſe called *the City of Waters*, either becauſe it ſtood upon a River, or was encompaſs'd by Water both for its Defence and Delight. But *Junius* renders it, that *he cut off the Waters, which ſupply'd the Town*; which Tranſlation not only *Joſephus* ſeems to favour by telling us, that *Joab* ſeiz'd on all the *Aqueducts* which led into the City; but *Polybius* (lib. v.) likewiſe, ſpeaking of the Siege of this ſame Place by *Antiochus*, relates the Story, how a certain *Deſerter* diſcover'd to that Prince a ſubterraneous Paſſage, through which the *Beſieg'd* came to draw Water, which *Antiochus* ſtopp'd up, and, by Reaſon of their Thirſt, compell'd them to ſurrender. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* How long Widows were to mourn for their Huſbands, there is no expreſs Precept in the Law; but the uſual Time for common Mourners was no more than ſeven Days; and we cannot ſuppoſe that *Bathſheba* was much longer, conſidering the Reaſon we have to apply to her the Words of *Lucan*:

—— Lacrymas non ſponte cadentes
Effudit, gemituſque expreſſit pectore læto.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

but it was not long before *David* ſent for her, † and declar'd her his Wife: And in this State he continu'd without any Moleſtation, or Apprehenſion of having done wrong for the Space of ſeveral Months, till at length God ſent † *Nathan* the Prophet to rouze him out of his *adulterous* Lethargy, and, by * an elegant *Parable*, to repreſent the Baſeneſs and Wickedneſs of what he had done, and to make him pronounce Sentence againſt his guilty ſelf. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

DAVID accordingly condemns himſelf, and confeſſes his Guilt, and humbly begs Pardon for what he had done: Whereupon *Nathan* was ſent again to inform him, that † God had pardon'd his Tranſgreſſion,

† According to the *Jewiſh* Doctors, it was utterly unlawful for any to marry another Man's Wife, in Caſe he had *defil'd* her before. The *canonical* Law declares ſuch Marriages null and void as are contracted between an adulterous Man and a Woman, that was Partner with him in the Crime; and, tho' the Law of *Moſes* does not expreſsly forbid them, yet we may not thence infer, that they were permitted among the *Jews*. For theſe Reaſons, ſome have thought, that this Marriage of *David* and *Bathſheba* was null and invalid; but others, upon better Grounds, have ſuppos'd, that, though there were many criminal Circumſtances attending it, yet theſe did not vacate its Effect, and, in ſhort, though it ought not to have been done, yet, being done, the Marriage was good, and the Children, which were afterwards born, were legitimate. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

† We learn little more of this great Man in the ſacred Writings, but that he was *David*'s Prophet, intimate Counſeller, and Hiſtoriographer. *Joſephus* ſays of him, that he was a *polite* and a *prudent* Man, one, who knew how to temper the Severity of Wiſdom, with Sweetneſs of Manners. And *Grotius* compares him to *Manius Lepidus*, of whom *Tacitus* ſays, that he had a Talent of turning away *Tiberius*'s Mind from thoſe cruel Purpoſes, to which the vile Flattery of others inclin'd him, and was, at the ſame Time, in equal Favour and Authority with him. *Nathan* certainly knew the Art of reproving Kings with Authority, and yet, without giving Offence. So far from that, he grew in his Prince's Favour and Eſtimation, as long as he liv'd; *inſomuch*, that *David* (as *Tradition* tells us) called one Son after his Name, and committed another (even his belov'd *Solomon*) to his Care and Tuition. The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III.

* There is a Paſſage of *Seneca*, (Epiſt. 59.) where he treats of the Stile fit for philoſophick Writing, which ſuits ſo well with this Parable of *Nathan*'s, that I chuſe to give it in his own Words, as a fit Preamble to the ſhort Comment, which follows, of it: *Invenio*, inquit, *imagines, quibus ſi quis nobis uti vetat, & Poetis illas ſolis judicat eſſe conceſſas, neminem mihi videtur ex antiquis legiſſe, apud quos nondum coptabatur plauſibilis Oratio. Illi, qui ſimpliciter, & demonſtrandæ Rei cauſâ loquebantur, Parabolis referti ſunt, quas exiſtimo neceſſarias, non ex eadem Cauſâ quâ Poëtis, ſed ut Imbecillitatis noſtræ adminicula ſint, & ut diſcentem & audientem in rem preſentem adducant:* For Parables, like Hiſtories, wherein we have no Concern, are heard with more Attention, and are ſo contriv'd, as to give no Offence, even tho' they provoke the Man, to whom they are addreſs'd, to condemn himſelf. *There were two Men in one City, the one rich, and the other poor: And the rich Man had exceeding many Flocks and Herds*; as *David* had many Wives and Concubines, with whom he might have well been ſatisfy'd, without violating another Man's Bed; *but the poor Man had nothing, ſave one little Ewe Lamb, which he had bought and nouriſhed up. Bathſheba*, very likely, was the only Wife that *Uriah* had, with whom he was highly pleas'd and delighted, and ſhe very probably with him, until *David*'s Temptations had perverted her Mind. *And it grew up together with him, and with his Children; it did eat of his own Meat, and drink of his own Cup, and lay in his Boſom, and was unto him as a Daughter. Nathan*, in his Reſemblance, cannot be ſaid to have ſurpaſs'd the Truth, conſidering how fond many Perſons were anciently, not only of Lambs, but of ſeveral others Creatures, which they ſuffer'd to eat with them at their Tables, and lie with them in their Beds; and that even at this Day it is a Cuſtom in *Arabia*, (which is contiguous to *Judæa*) to have one of the fineſt Lambs in the Flock brought up in the Houſe, and fed with the Children. And *there came a Traveller to the rich Man:* This denotes *David*'s ſtraggling Appetie, which he ſuffer'd to wander from his own home, and to covet another Man's Wife: And of this Appetite the *Jewiſh* Doctors have this Obſervation, that "In the Beginning it is but a Traveller, but in Time it becomes a Gueſt, and in Concluſion is the "Maſter of the Houſe." *And he ſpared* to take of his own Flock, *and his own Herds*, wherewith he might have ſatisfy'd his Appetite, *but took the poor Man's Lamb, and dreſſed it for the way-faring Man, that was come to him.* Moſt Commentators here take Notice, that *Nathan* did not go ſo far in the Parable, as to ſay any Thing of the rich Man's killing the poor Man. This certainly would have made the Reſemblance more compleat, but it is therefore omitted, that *David* might not ſo readily apprehend *Nathan*'s Meaning, and ſo be induc'd unawares to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation upon himſelf; whereupon the Prophet had a fair Opportunity to ſhew him, that, if the rich Man, who took away the poor Man's Lamb, deſerv'd Death, according to his own Judgment, how much more did he deſerve it, who had not only taken another Man's Wife, but caus'd him to be ſlain likewiſe by the Enemies of *Iſrael*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† It may very well be aſk'd, how God ſo readily came to forgive *David*, when he acknowledg'd his Tranſgreſſion, and yet did not forgive *Saul*, tho' he made the like Confeſſion, *I have ſinned?* But the Anſwer is obvious, that, be the Form of Expreſſion what it will, unleſs it proceeds from the Sincerity of the Heart, the great Searcher of Hearts will not regard it. The true Reaſon therefore, why *Saul* could not obtain a Revocation of his Sentence of Rejection, was, becauſe his Repentance was not ſincere; it did not proceed from an humble and contrite Spirit. At the ſame Time that he acknowledg'd his Sin, he deſir'd *Samuel to honour him before the People*, and perſiſted in his Diſobedience ever after: Whereas *David*, on the contrary, humbled himſelf, wept, and lamented for his Sin, and of his Penitence

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Tranſgreſſion, *viz.* the eternal Puniſhment due to his Tranſgreſſion God had remitted, but the * *temporal* ſhould be inflicted on him: That therefore the Son (for by this Time *Bathſheba* was brought to-bed of a Son) begotten in this *adulterous* Congreſs, ſhould not live; that ſeveral of his Family ſhould come to an untimely Death; that ſome one of his Sons ſhould riſe up in Rebellion againſt him; and his own Wives be defil'd publickly, and in the Sight of all the World, becauſe he had given ſuch Scandal to his own People, and † ſuch Occaſion to the Enemies of God to *blaſpheme*. From 2 Sam. i. to xix

NOR was it long before Part of this Sentence began to be executed upon him: For the Child, which he had by *Bathſheba*, was taken ſick and died. While it was ſick, * *David* faſted and pray'd, if

has left us a perpetual and eternal Monument in *Pſalm* li. *Have Mercy upon me, O God, after thy great Goodneſs; according to the Multitude of thy Mercies, do away mine Offences, waſh me thoroughly from my Wickedneſs, and cleanſe me from my Sin*, &c.

* In the Threats, which God orders *Nathan* to denounce againſt *David*, the Expreſſions are,——*I will raiſe up Evil againſt thee out of thy own Houſe, and I will take thy Wives before thine Eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour, and he ſhall lie with thy Wives in the Sight of the Sun; but thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this Thing before all* Iſrael, *and before the Sun*, 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12. Where the Words, *I will raiſe up, I will take, I will do*, do not denote any poſitive Actions of God, as if he prompted wicked Men to do the ſame Things, wherewith he threatens *David*, inſomuch that, without ſuch Prompting, they would not have done them, but by it were neceſſitated to do them: Such a Conſtruction as this is injurious to the Divine Attributes, and makes God the Author of Evil. But the true Meaning is——That God, at that Time, ſaw the perverſe Diſpoſition of one of his Sons, and the crafty Wilineſs of one of his Counſellors, which, without reſtraining them, would not fail to create *David* no ſmall Uneaſineſs: And therefore, becauſe *David* had violated his Law, and, to gratify his Luſt, had committed both Adultery and Murther, God would not interpoſe, but ſuffer'd the Tempers of theſe two wicked Perſons to follow their own Courſe, and have their natural Swing; whereupon the one, being ambitious of a Crown, endeavours to depoſe his Father, and the other, willing to make the Breach irreparable, adviſ'd the moſt deteſted Thing he could think of. This indeed was the very Thing that God had foretold, but, without any Imputation upon his Attributes, we may ſay, that God can ſo diſpoſe and guide a Train of Circumſtances, that the Wickedneſs of any Action ſhall happen in this Manner rather than another, tho' he do not infuſe into any Man the *Will* to do wickedly. *Torrenti nequitiæ, ut ſic loquar*, (for I give you the Commentator's own Words, becauſe there is ſomething very accurate in them) *nullas vires addit, ſed impedit, ne hac, potius quam illac, perrumpat; circumſtantiaſque omnes (quæ nihil vitii in ſe habent) ita dirigit, & moderatur, ut certum quendam eventum conſequantur. Sunt autem innumeræ ejuſmodi circumſtantiæ, quibus nihil ineſt mali, & quibus tamen res, pro Dei arbitrio, variantur; Deoque ſunt non pauciores viæ, quibus omnia regat, ſine ullâ virtutum ſuarum imminutione, & ità, ut libertatem intereà peccandi aut parendi hominibus relinquat.* So that from ſuch Scripture Phraſes as theſe, we may not infer, that God either does, or can do Evil, but only, that he permits that Evil to be done, which he foreknew would be done, but might have prevented, had he pleas'd; or, in other Terms, that he ſuffers Men, naturally wicked, to follow the *Bent* of their Tempers, without any Interpoſition of his Providence to reſtrain them. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

† *David*'s Crime, which at firſt was ſecret, was in Time diſcover'd, and the Report of it carry'd to the neighbouring Nations. The *Syrians*, the *Ammonites*, the *Moabites*, the *Edomites*, the *Philiſtines*, People whom he had ſubdu'd, and who, out of pure Malice, had always a jealous Eye upon his Conduct, would not fail upon this Occaſion to murmur, and ſay, "How could God thus favour an Adulterer and Murtherer? Where is his Juſtice, and his "Providence? Is this the God, who is ſaid to be ſo equitable in his Dealings with Men, and ſo ſevere an Avenger "of Iniquity, and yet makes Choice of ſuch a Monſter as this to govern his People? This is the *David, the Man "after God's own Heart*, whom he preferr'd before *Saul*, on whom he hath pour'd down innumerable Bleſſings, and "for whom he hath many rich Promiſes in Reſerve; and yet did *Saul* ever commit ſuch horrid Enormities as this "Man has done, and ſtill continues to be the Favourite of God?" Such Reflections (we may reaſonably imagine) would *David*'s Tranſgreſſions have occaſion'd among Strangers, and Enemies, who might thence be induc'd to deſpiſe a Religion they were acquainted with, and which he, who ſhould have been its main Support, ſo little regarded. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* *David*'s Acts of Humiliation for his Sins are thus deſcrib'd by *Salvian (de Gubern. Dei)* "He put off his Purple, "threw away his Royal Ornaments, laid down his Diadem, wholly ſtripp'd himſelf of his Kingſhip, and appear'd as "a Penitent, in a ſqualid, rueful Garb, faſting, lying on the Ground, confeſſing, mourning, repenting, deprecating, "&c. and yet, with all his Humiliation and Compunction, he could not obtain a Revocation of this Puniſhment." But why ſhould the Death of this Child, who, had he liv'd, would have been a perpetual Monument of Guilt, and a Brand of Infamy upon his Parents, be accounted by *David* ſo great a Puniſhment? The true Way to account for this, is to aſcribe it to *David*'s Exceſs of Paſſion for *Bathſheba*, which ſo ſtrongly attach'd him to every Offspring of her's, and made him forget every Thing in this Child, but that Motive of Endearment. Beſides this, there is ſomething in human Nature, which prompts us to rate Things after a Manner ſeemingly unaccountable; and to eſtimate them, not according to their real Worth, but according to the Expence or Trouble, or even the Diſtreſs they coſt us. Nor ſhould it

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if poſſibly he might appeaſe the divine Wrath, and intercede for its Life; but when it it was dead, he acknowledg'd the Juſtice of God, and, chearfully ſubmitting to his Will, made his ardent Supplications to him, that the Remainder of his Afflictions might be mixed with Mercy. This in ſome Meaſure was done; for, in a proper Space of Time, he had another Son † by *Bathſheba*, who was nam'd † *Solomon*, in Confidence of the Promiſe which God had made, that his Reign ſhould be crown'd with *Peace*: But this did not hinder the Divine Juſtice from being true to its *Threats*, as well as its *Promiſes*.

Solomon *is born.*

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

DAVID had ſeveral Sons, but only one Daughter that we read of, whoſe Name was *Tamar* (Siſter to *Abſalom*, by *Maacha*, the Daughter of *Talmai* King of † *Geſhur*) a Princeſs of excellent Beauty, and with whom *Amnon*, his eldeſt Son by another Queen, fell deſperately in Love, and pin'd away with an † hopeleſs Deſire of obtaining her; till at length, by the Advice and Contrivance of *Jonadab*, his intimate Friend, and † *Couſin-German*, he found Means to *decoy* her into his Apartment, where, † notwithſtanding all her Intreaties and Expoſtulations with him, he firſt raviſh'd her, and, when his brutiſh Paſſion was ſatisfy'd, in a ſullen Humour † bid

Amnon *raviſhes his Siſter* Tamar.

it be forgot, that this exceſſive Mourning did not proceed ſimply from the Fear of the Loſs of the Child, but from a deep Senſe of his Sin, and of the divine Diſpleaſure manifeſted in the Child's Sickneſs, and particularly from a juſt Apprehenſion of the Injury, which he had done the *Infant* by his Sin, and which he thought himſelf bound in Juſtice, by Prayer and Interceſſion, as much as he was able, to repair. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

† It is very obſervable, that, in the whole Compaſs of this Story, there is not a Word ſaid either of *Bathſheba*'s Guilt or Puniſhment; but this might be, becauſe, as to the Matter of her Huſband's Death, ſhe was innocent; to the *Adultery*, which ſhe committed, ſhe was entic'd by the Offers of a powerful King; and in the *Calamities* which befel him, ſhe, no doubt, had her Share, and felt her Puniſhment. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† The Word *Solomon* is properly deriv'd from *Schalom*, which ſignifies *Peace*, intimating that his Reign ſhould be *peaceable*: but, by God's Appointment, *Nathan* gave him another Name, *viz. Jedidiah*, i. e. *the Beloved of God*. The Scripture, however, never calls him by this Name, but only by that of *Solomon*; for what Reaſon we cannot tell, unleſs we may ſuppoſe, that the People, being long harraſs'd in War during his Father's Reign, might be pleas'd with this Name, and uſe it rather than the other, to intimate their Hopes and longing Deſire of *Peace*. And for this Reaſon (among others) it may be inferr'd, that *Solomon* was born after the Concluſion of the *Ammoniti/h* War, tho' the ſacred Hiſtory takes Occaſion, from the Death of *Bathſheba's Firſt-born*, to relate that Event firſt. Not long after this, *David* had another Son by *Bathſheba*, (2 Sam. v. 14. and 1 Chron. iii. 5.) whom he called *Nathan*, after the Name of the Prophet; and of theſe two *Chriſt* was born, tho' in different Lines: For *Joſeph*, his ſuppos'd Father, came from *Solomon*, as *Matthew* (Chap. i. Ver. 6, 7.) relates it; and *Mary*, his real Mother, came from *Nathan*, as it is in St *Luke*, Chap. iii. Ver. 31. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, and *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 4.

†, The Borders of the *Geſhurites* and *Maacathites* (as we read *Joſh.* xiii. 11, 13.) were given by *Moſes* to the *Iſraelites*, that ſeated themſelves on the *Eaſt* of *Jordan*; nevertheleſs *the Children of* Iſrael *expelled not the* Geſhurites *and* Maacathites, *but they dwelt among the* Iſraelites, *unto this Day*: From whence it is evident, that the Cities of *Geſhur* and *Maacah*, the two *Capitals* of two ſmall Kingdoms, lay within the Borders of the Land of *Iſrael*: And tho' it does not appear how they were ſituated in reſpect of each other, yet it is certain, that they both lay on the *South* Side of Mount *Libanus*, in the *North* Part of the *Half Tribe* of *Manaſſeh*, and on the *Eaſt* Side of the River *Jordan*. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

† Virgins of the *Blood-royal* were kept ſecluſe in Apartments ſeparate from the Commerce of Men, into which not only Strangers, but even their own Fathers were not permitted to enter. *Amnon* however, at ſome Time or other, had ſeen the beautiful *Tamar*, or otherwiſe he could not have conceiv'd ſo ſtrong a Paſſion for her. Upon ſome certain *Ceremonial* Occaſions indeed, it was cuſtomary for the young Women to walk out, and ſhew themſelves; but, conſidering their cloſe Confinement at other Times, it was hardly poſſible for *Amnon* to find an Opportunity of declaring his Paſſion, much leſs of gratifying it; and therefore, out of pure Deſpair, he pin'd himſelf into a *Conſumption*. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† *Jonadab* was the Son of *Shimeah*, the Brother of *David*.

† There is ſomething ſo moving, and the Arguments are ſo ſtrong, in *Tamar*'s Speech to *Amnon*, that one would almoſt wonder why it did not prevail with him to deſiſt. *Nay, my Brother, do not force me.* Here ſhe reminds him of his *Relation* to her, for which ſhe hop'd he would have ſuch a Reverence, as not to meddle with her, tho' ſhe herſelf were willing, much leſs to offer Violence to her, which it was abominable to do even to a Stranger, much more to one of the ſame Blood. *For no ſuch Thing ought to be done in* Iſrael. Whatever other Nations did, who had not the Knowledge of God's Laws, ſhe begs of him to conſider, that they both belong'd to a Nation, which was God's *peculiar People*, had been inſtructed better, and therefore ſhould act otherwiſe. *Do not thou this Folly.* She prays him (beſides the Scandal it would give) to recollect with himſelf on the Heinouſneſs of the Crime, and how highly offenſive it would

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For which he is murther'd by her Brother Abſalom.

† bid her be gone; and when ſhe remonſtrated the ill Uſage, had her turn'd out by main Force.

* IN this mournful and diſtracted Condition *Tamar* repairs to her Brother *Abſalom*, and tells him the whole Tranſaction of her *Rape:* But her Brother, tho' naturally a Man of an high Spirit, adviſ'd her to be ſilent in Point of Prudence, becauſe her *Raviſher* was Heir apparent to the Crown; and himſelf ſo † artfully conceal'd his own Reſentment, that every one believ'd he had taken no Notice of it. But about two Years after, under the Pretence of a Sheep-ſhearing Entertainment, (which, in thoſe Countries, us'd to be attended with great Mirth and Jollity) he invited his Friends and Relations, and, with the King's Conſent (tho' himſelf declin'd going) all the Princes of the *Blood*, and more eſpecially his Brother *Amnon*, to his Country-Seat at *Hazor*; where, while they were engag'd in Feaſting and Drinking, his Servants, by his Direction, and through the Promiſe of an Impunity, fell upon *Amnon*, (as *Abſalom* gave the Signal) and immediately diſpatch'd him. This put the reſt of the Princes into ſuch a Conſternation, that they made the beſt of their Way from the Houſe, as expecting the like Fate; and the King, when he heard the firſt News of the Thing, (ſuppoſing that *Abſalom* had kill'd all the reſt of his Brothers) was thrown into

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would be to the Divine Majeſty. *And I, whither ſhall I cauſe my Shame to go?* She beſeeches him (beſides the Sin againſt God) to conſider the Diſgrace it would be to her, who, after ſuch a *foul* Act, muſt be aſham'd to look any one in the Face, *And as for thee, thou ſhalt be as one of the Fools in* Iſrael. Laſtly, She puts him in Mind of his own Reputation, which ſo vile an Action would tarniſh for ever, and make him be look'd upon as a Man void of all Senſe, Religion, Honour, and Humanity. *Now therefore, I pray thee, ſpeak to the King; for he will not with-hold me from thee.* It is a common Opinion among the *Jewiſh* Doctors, that, in the War which King *David* had with the King of *Geſhur*, he took *Maacah*, his Daughter, captive, and (as they fancy their Law allows, *Deut.* xxi. 11.) lay with her for once only, and then begat this Daughter; but that, upon her becoming a *Proſelyte* to the *Jewiſh* Religion, he marry'd her, and afterwards had *Abſalom*. *Tamar* therefore being born while her Mother was a *Gentile*, they ſuppoſe that ſhe was not *David*'s *legal* Child, and that *Amnon* conſequently might marry her: But all this is mere Talk, without any Shadow of Proof. The moſt probable Opinion is, that ſhe was neither ignorant of the Law, (*Levit.* xviii. 11.) which prohibited ſuch inceſtuous Marriages, nor thought her Father's Power ſo great, as that he might *diſpenſe* with the Law upon this Occaſion, but merely that ſhe ſaid any Thing, which ſhe thought would pleaſe him, to ſtop his Sollicitations, and rude Attempts, and to eſcape, for the preſent, out of his Hands. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Jewiſh* Antiquities, lib. vii. c. 8.

† Interpreters ſeem to be at a great Loſs to find out the Reaſon, why *Amnon*'s Love to his Siſter ſhould ſo ſoon be converted into ſuch an Hatred, as to make him act ſo rudely, ſo brutally towards her; but it is no uncommon Thing for Men of violent and irregular Paſſions to paſs from one *Extreme* to another. The Shame, which accompanies every baſe Action, the Remorſe, and Repentance, and many bad Conſequences, that immediately purſue it, makes a Recoil in every Man's Temper; and therefore it is no Wonder, that a *libidinous* young Man, who would not ſpare ſo much as his own Siſter, ſhould, after Fruition, and when the Ardour of his Luſt was ſatisfy'd, be ſeiz'd with a contrary Paſſion, and hate the Object he lov'd ſo much before, when he came coolly to compare the *Pleaſure* and the *Sin* together, the *Shortneſs* of the one, and the *Heinouſneſs* of the other. He *hated his Siſter*, when he ſhould have hated himſelf; and, as this outrageous Treatment of her made it impoſſible for his Guilt to be conceal'd, ſo God ſeems to have abandon'd him to the Tumult of his intemperate Mind, on purpoſe to make this Puniſhment of *David*'s Adultery more flagrant, and the Prophet's Prediction of *raiſing up Evil to him out of his own Houſe*, 2 Sam. xii. 11. more conſpicuous. *Calmet*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries, and The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*.

* The Manner of *Tamar*'s ſignifying her Vexation for the Injury and Diſgrace, which her Brother had put upon her, is expreſs'd by her *putting Aſhes upon her Head*, 2 Sam. xiii. 19. and that this was an antient Cuſtom, whereby to denote one's Grief and Concern for any great Loſs or Calamity, is evident from that Paſſage of the Prophet, concerning the People of *Tyre: They ſhall cry bitterly, caſt Dirt upon their Heads, and wallow themſelves in the Aſhes*, Ezek. xxvii. 30. from *Achilles*'s Behaviour upon the Death of *Patroclus*, we have it in *Homer:*

Ἀμφοτέρῃσι δὲ χερσὶν ἐλὼν κόνιν αἰθαλόεσσαν
Χεύατο κακκεφαλῆς, χάρμη δ' ἤσχυνε πρόσωπον. Iliad. xviii.

And from what *Mezentius* did, upon the Death of his *Lauſus*, according to *Virgil:*

Canitiem immundo deformat pulvere, & ambas
Ad cœlum tendit palmas ——— Æneid. x.

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‡ This is ſaid in the Text to have been *after forty Years*, 2 Sam. xv. 7. but where to date the Beginning of the *forty Years* has occaſion'd much Diſagreement among Commentators. Some compute them from the Time that the *Iſraelites* demanded a King of *Samuel*; others, from the firſt Time that *David* was anointed King; others, from the firſt Commencement of his Reign over *Judah*; and others again, from the Time that he took Poſſeſſion of the whole Kingdom. The two latter of theſe Opinions are inſupportable, becauſe *David* reign'd but forty Years in all, and was now ſo hail and hearty, as to be able to walk on Foot; whereas, in the latter End of his Life, he was very infirm and *Bed-rid*. The learned *Uſher* indeed makes theſe forty Years to commence from the Time of *David*'s firſt Unction, that therefore he was threeſcore Years old, when this Rebellion broke out, and liv'd ten Years after it: But (with all due Deference to ſo great Authority) both *this*, and the other Opinion, that computes from the Time that the Demand of a King was made, are forc'd and unnatural; have no Affinity to the Text, nor do they ſuggeſt any Reaſon, why the ſacred Hiſtorian ſhould begin his Account of this unnatural Rebellion, with an *And it came to paſs, that after forty Years*: Whereas, if we conſider the Account of what went before; how *Abſalom*, by all the Arts of Popularity, a ſplendid Equipage, condeſcenſive Behaviour, large Promiſes, and flattering Speeches, had alienated the Hearts of the People from his Father; we cannot but be tempted to think, that there is an Error crept into the Text; that inſtead of *Arbaim*, *forty*, as our Copies have it, the Word ſhould be *Arba*, *four*, only, *i. e.* four Years after that *Abſalom* was re-eſtabliſh'd in *Jeruſalem*, and had us'd all his alluring Arts to gain the Nation's Affections, the firſt Step that he took, was to go to *Hebron*. This makes the Senſe eaſy and entire, and is confirm'd by the Authority of the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Verſions, the Judgment of ſeveral able Criticks, and the Teſtimony of *Joſephus* himſelf, whoſe Words are, μετὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς καταλλαγὴν τεσσάρων ἐτῶν ἤδη παραλελυθότων, that, *four Years after his Father was reconcil'd to him*, this Conſpiracy broke out. *Calmet*'s Commentary, *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes, and *Joſephus*'s *Jewiſh* Antiquities, lib. vii. c. 8.

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Hunc decus egregium formæ movet, atque juventæ,
Hunc atavi reges, hunc claris dextera factis. Æneid. lib. vii.

‡ This is ſaid in the Text to have been *after forty Years*, 2 Sam. xv. 7. but where to date the Beginning of the *forty Years* has occaſion'd much Diſagreement among Commentators. Some compute them from the Time that the *Iſraelites* demanded a King of *Samuel*; others, from the firſt Time that *David* was anointed King; others, from the firſt Commencement of his Reign over *Judah*; and others again, from the Time that he took Poſſeſſion of the whole Kingdom. The two latter of theſe Opinions are inſupportable, becauſe *David* reign'd but forty Years in all, and was now ſo hail and hearty, as to be able to walk on Foot; whereas, in the latter End of his Life, he was very infirm and *Bed-rid*. The learned *Uſher* indeed makes theſe forty Years to commence from the Time of *David*'s firſt Unction, that therefore he was threeſcore Years old, when this Rebellion broke out, and liv'd ten Years after it: But (with all due Deference to ſo great Authority) both *this*, and the other Opinion, that computes from the Time that the Demand of a King was made, are forc'd and unnatural; have no Affinity to the Text, nor do they ſuggeſt any Reaſon, why the ſacred Hiſtorian ſhould begin his Account of this unnatural Rebellion, with an *And it came to paſs, that after forty Years*: Whereas, if we conſider the Account of what went before; how *Abſalom*, by all the Arts of Popularity, a ſplendid Equipage, condeſcenſive Behaviour, large Promiſes, and flattering Speeches, had alienated the Hearts of the People from his Father; we cannot but be tempted to think, that there is an Error crept into the Text; that inſtead of *Arbaim*, *forty*, as our Copies have it, the Word ſhould be *Arba*, *four*, only, *i. e.* four Years after that *Abſalom* was re-eſtabliſh'd in *Jeruſalem*, and had us'd all his alluring Arts to gain the Nation's Affections, the firſt Step that he took, was to go to *Hebron*. This makes the Senſe eaſy and entire, and is confirm'd by the Authority of the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Verſions, the Judgment of ſeveral able Criticks, and the Teſtimony of *Joſephus* himſelf, whoſe Words are, μετὰ δὲ τὴν τῦ πατρὸς καταλλαγὴν τεσσάρων ἐτῶν ἤδη παραλιθότων, that, *four Years after his Father was reconcil'd to him*, this Conſpiracy broke out. *Calmet*'s Commentary, *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes, and *Joſephus*'s *Jewiſh* Antiquities, lib. vii. c. 8.

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ing that he had vowed a Vow in his *Exile*, that, whenever it ſhould pleaſe God to bring him back to *Jeruſalem*, he would offer, in that Place, a ſolemn Sacrifice of Thankſgiving. The King little ſuſpecting his hidden Deſign, and being deſirous that all religious Services ſhould be punctually perform'd, gave him free Leave to go, and wiſh'd him a good Journey. *Hebron* was the Place of his own Nativity, and where the Royal Seat had been, in the Beginning of *David*'s Reign; and therefore he thought it the propereſt for his wicked Enterpriſe: And no ſooner was he ſettled there, but he ſent his *Emiſſaries* about to ſound the Inclinations of the ſeveral Tribes, and to exhort thoſe, whom they ſhould gain over to his Party, to be ready to take up Arms, † as ſoon as they ſhould hear that he was proclaim'd King. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

The King leaves Jeruſalem, *and, in his Retreat, meets with various Kinds of Uſage.*

This occaſion'd a general Inſurrection. *Abſalom* was the Nation's *Darling*; and upon this Summons, † People flock'd to him from every Part: So that *David*, who had Intelligence of all this, thought it not ſafe for him to continue any longer in *Jeruſalem* †, but, leaving the Place, with a Deſign to retire beyond *Jordan*, he was attended by his Guards, his beſt Troops, and principal Friends. *Zadok* and *Abiathar* the Prieſts, underſtanding that the King was departed from *Jeruſalem*, brought *the Ark of the Covenant* to accompany him in his Diſtreſs; but † he deſir'd them to carry

† The Expreſſion in the Text is, *as ſoon as you hear the Sound of the Trumpet*, 2 Sam. xv. 10. which looks as if *Abſalom* had planted Trumpeters at proper Diſtances to take the Sound from one another, and diſperſe it over all the Kingdom, that ſo they, who were Lovers of his Cauſe, might inſtantly reſort to his Aſſiſtance and Support; to which they were encourag'd, no doubt, by the Suggeſtions of his *Emiſſaries*, who might perſuade the People, that all this was done by the King's Conſent and Approbation, who, being aged and infirm himſelf, was willing to reſign his Kingdom to his eldeſt and moſt noble Son, who was deſcended from a King by both Parents. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

† It would really make one wonder, how any People could ſo eaſily abandon a Prince, ſo brave, ſo happy, and ſucceſsful as *David* had been; how they could forget his excellent Qualities, or be unmindful of the Services he had done the Nation; but for this there may be ſome Reaſons aſſign'd. In every Nation there are always ſome turbulent and diſcontented Spirits, who are uneaſy with the preſent State of Things, and promiſe themſelves ſome Benefit from a Change. *Saul*'s Party was not as yet entirely extinct, and *Joab*, who was *David*'s *Prime Miniſter*, behav'd with an inſufferable Pride and Inſolence. His Crimes, which were very black, and which the King durſt not puniſh, redounded upon him; and the King himſelf had given his Enemies Umbrage enough againſt him, in living with *Bathſheba*, after he had murther'd her Huſband: But, what gave the faireſt Pretence of all, was the Obſtruction of *Juſtice* in the *Civil* Adminiſtration: For, had there not been ſomething of this, *Abſalom* could have had no Grounds for making ſo loud Complaints. Theſe were ſome of the Cauſes of ſo general a Revolt in the People: And, yet, after all, there might be ſomething in what *Abarbinel* imagines, *viz.* That neither *Abſalom*, nor the Elders of *Iſrael*, nor the reſt of the People, who were miſled by them, had any Intention to diveſt *David* of his Crown and Dignity, much leſs to take away his Life; but only to ſubſtitute *Abſalom*, as *Coadjutor* to him, for the Execution of the Royal Authority, during his Lifetime, and to be his *Succeſſor* after his Death. For, as it would have been monſtrouſly wicked in *Abſalom* to have deſign'd the Deſtruction of ſo kind a Father; ſo it is hard to conceive, how he could have gain'd to his Party ſuch a Multitude of *Abettors* in ſo villainous an Enterpriſe. This however we may obſerve, that *David* look'd upon their Proceedings (2 *Sam.* xv. 14. and xvi. 11.) as an Attempt upon his Life; and that (whatever their firſt Intentions were) they came at laſt to a Reſolution to have him killed, to make way for their own better Security: Which may be a ſufficient Warning to all Men, never to begin any Thing that is wrong, for fear that it ſhould lead them to the Commiſſion of that, which they at firſt abhorr'd, when they find they cannot be ſafe in one Wickedneſs, without perpetrating a greater. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

† Tho' the Fort of *Sion* was very ſtrong and impregnable, yet there are ſeveral Reaſons which might induce *David* to quit *Jeruſalem*. He had not laid in Proviſions for a long Siege, nor was *Jeruſalem*, in every Part of it, *defenſible*; and if *Abſalom* had once took it, as it was the *Capital*, he would ſoon have been Maſter of the whole Kingdom. There was ſome Reaſon to ſuſpect likewiſe, that the Inhabitants were faulty, and ſo much addicted to the contrary Party, that had he ſtood a Siege, and been reduc'd to Straits, they might poſſibly deliver him up to *Abſalom*. Nor was the Preſervation of the City itſelf, which *David* had beautify'd, and adorn'd with a fine and ſtately Palace, and where God had appointed to put his Name and Worſhip, the leaſt Part of his Concern; and therefore he thought it more conducive to his Intereſt in all Reſpects, rather than be *cooped* up in a Place, which he deſired to preſerve from being the Seat of War, to march abroad into the Country, where he might probably raiſe a conſiderable Army, both for his own Defence, and the Suppreſſion of the Rebels. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† This he might do for ſeveral Reaſons; for either he might think it not decent to have the *Ark* wander about with him he knew not whither, and to expoſe it to all the Hazards and Inconveniencies, which he himſelf was like to undergo; or he might ſuppoſe, that this would be a Means to expoſe the Prieſts to the Violence of *Abſalom*'s Rage, (as

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carry it back, and to continue in *Jeruſalem*, becauſe they might be of Uſe to gain him Intelligence of the Enemies Motions and Deſigns, and their Character was too ſacred, to fear any Violence from the *Uſurper*. *Huſhai*, † the *Archite*, his faithful Friend and Counſellor, came likewiſe to attend him, and, with all Expreſſions of Sorrow, to ſee his royal Maſter in ſuch Diſtreſs, offer'd to ſhare his Fortune: But *David* enjoin'd him to return, and told him, that he would be more ſerviceable to him in the City, by pretending to adhere to *Abſalom*, and by defeating the Counſels of *Ahitophel*, who, as he underſtood for Certainty, was † engag'd in his Son's Meaſures, and whoſe great Abilities (which the King was not unacquainted with) gave him no ſmall Uneaſineſs.

DAVID had ſcarce paſs'd over Mount *Olivet*, which lies to the *Eaſt* of *Jeruſalem*, when *Ziba*, whom he had made Steward to *Mephiboſheth* his Friend *Jonathan*'s Son, came, and preſented him with a ‡ conſiderable Quantity of Wine, and other Proviſions; but, upon the King's enquiring for his Maſter, who he thought above all Men, in Point of *Gratitude*, ſhould have kept firm to his Intereſt, the perfidious Wretch accus'd him of ſtaying behind in *Jeruſalem*, in Hopes that himſelf might be made King; and the too *credulous* King, in this general Diſtraction of his Affairs, believing the Accuſation to be true, made an haſty *Grant* of all *Mephiboſheth*'s Eſtate to this baſe Servant, and treacherous *Sycophant*. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

As *David* drew near to *Bahurim*, a City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, † one *Shimei*, a Deſcendant from the Family of *Saul*, and who dwelt in that Place, came out, and *threw Stones at him*, and, in the Hearing of the whole Company, loaded him with the bittereſt Reproaches and Execrations, ſo that *Abiſhai* deſir'd Leave of the King to go and diſpatch the inſolent Rebel: But, by no Means, would the King permit him, but bore all with an admirable Patience, † and Reſignation to

(as he had before expos'd them to *Saul*'s Fury upon another Occaſion) if God, in his Judgment, ſhould permit him to prevail; or this might look as a Diſtruſt of the Divine Goodneſs, and that he plac'd more Confidence in the *Token* of God's Preſence, than he did in God himſelf, who had preſerv'd him in the long Perſecution of *Saul*, when he had no Ark with him. But what ſeems the chief Reaſon, at that Time, for his ſending back the Ark, was, —— That the Prieſts and *Levites*, (of whoſe Fidelity he was ſufficiently ſatisfy'd) by giving him Intelligence of the Enemies Motions, might do him more Service in *Jeruſalem*, than they could do in his Camp. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† This Man might be of the antient Race of the *Archites*, Deſcendants from *Canaan*, of whom *Moſes* ſpeaks, *Gen.* x. 17. but ſince the Name of theſe antient People is differently written, I ſhould rather think, that this additional Name was given him from the Place of his Nativity, *viz. Archi*, a Town ſituated on the Frontiers of *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*, to the *Weſt* of *Bethel*, Joſh. xvi. 2.

† The *Jews* are of Opinion, that *Ahitophel* was incens'd againſt *David*, and therefore ready to go over to the adverſe Party, becauſe he had abus'd *Bathſheba*, whom they take to have been his *Grand-daughter*, becauſe ſhe was the Daughter of *Eliam*, 2 Sam. xi. 3. and *Ahitophel* had a Son of that Name, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 34. for this Reaſon they imagine, that he adviſ'd *Abſalom* to lie with his Father's *Concubines*, that he might be repaid in Kind; tho' the Scripture aſſigns another, *viz.* that he and his Father might thereby become irreconcileable Enemies. *Pool*'s Annotations.

‡ And yet the Text tells us, it was but *one Bottle*: But what we render *Bottle*, was, in thoſe Times, a *Bag*, or Veſſel made of Leather, which might contain a great deal of Wine; becauſe we cannot ſuppoſe, but that the *Liquor* was proportionate to the reſt of the Preſent. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Whether this Man had been a perſonal Sufferer in the Fall of *Saul*'s Family, or what elſe had exaſperated him againſt *David*, it no where appears; but it ſeems, as if he had conceiv'd ſome very heinous Offence againſt him, when neither the Preſence of a King, nor the *Terror* of his Guards, could reſtrain him from throwing Stones, and bitter Speeches at him: And it looks, as if the King were fallen into the utmoſt Contempt, when one private Man could think of venting his Malice at him, in ſo groſs a Manner, with Impunity. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

† The Words of *David* upon this Occaſion are, *So let him curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, curſe* David; *Let him alone, let him curſe, for the Lord hath bidden him*; not that God commanded it by his Word, for that ſeverely forbids Curſing, *Exod.* xxii. 28, nor mov'd him to it by his Spirit; for neither was that poſſible, becauſe God *tempteth no Man*, James i. 13. But the Meaning is, that the ſecret Providence of God did over-rule, and determine him ſo to do, *i. e.* God did not put any Wickedneſs into *Shimei*'s Heart (for he had, of himſelf, an Heart full of Malignity and Venom againſt *David*) but only left him to his own Wickedneſs; took away that common Prudence, which would have reſtrain'd him from ſo dangerous an Action; directed his Malice, that it ſhould be exercis'd againſt *David*, rather

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to the Will of God, as being conſcious of of his own Guilt in the Caſe of *Uriah*, and of the divine Juſtice in thus afflicting him.

Abſalom *enters* Jeruſalem.

While *David* continu'd at *Bahurim*, *Abſalom* and his Party entering *Jeruſalem*, were receiv'd with the general *Acclamations* of the People, and *Huſhai*, not forgetful of the King's Inſtructions, went to compliment him, and offer'd him his Service. *Abſalom* knew that he was his Father's intimate Friend and *Counſellor*, and therefore banter'd him at firſt, upon his pretending to deſert his old Maſter; but *Huſhai* † excus'd himſelf in ſuch a Manner, and anſwer'd all his *Queſtions* with that Subtlety, that he paſs'd upon the Prince for a worthy Friend, and accordingly was receiv'd into his *Privy-Council.*

Ahitophel's *Counſel, upon the Rejection of which, he hangs himſelf.*

A *COUNCIL* was preſently call'd, wherein *Ahitophel*, who was *Preſident*, and ſtood higheſt in *Abſalom*'s Eſteem, ſpake firſt; and the two chief Things, which he adviſ'd him to do, were, firſt to place a Tent on the Top of the Palace, (for by this Time he had taken Poſſeſſion of his Father's Palace) and to lie *publickly* with his Father's *Concubines*, that all the Soldiers might ſee, and conclude that, after ſuch an Indignity, there could be no Hopes of a Reconciliation, and thereby be incited to fight more deſperately to ſecure him in the Poſſeſſion of the Throne. This Advice was ſuitable perhaps to the young Man's vicious Inclinations, and therefore he delay'd not to put it in Execution: But, as for the *ſecond* Thing, which *Ahitophel* propos'd, *viz.* "To "take twelve Thouſand choice Men, "and purſue after *David* that * very "Night, and to fall upon his *Guards*, "which were fatigu'd with their March, "and unable to make Reſiſtance, and ſo "ſurprize the King, and kill him," he deſir'd to conſult *Huſhai* herein; who, ſeeming not to ſlight *Ahitophel*'s Propoſal, adviſ'd *rather* to delay the Attempt, until he had got all the Forces of the Kingdom together. "For, as *David* and his "Men were known to be brave, and, at "that Time, both † exaſperated, and "deſperate, in Caſe they ſhould worſt "the Party ſent againſt them, this would "be

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

rather than any other Man; and brought him into ſo diſtreſs'd a Condition, that he might ſeem a proper Object of his Scorn and Contempt, which is enough to juſtify the Expreſſion, *The Lord hath bidden him*; in the ſame Manner that we read of his *commanding the Ravens*, 1 Kings xvii. 4. and ſometimes inanimate Creatures, *Pſal.* cxlvii. 15, 18. The ſhort is, *David* look'd upon *Shimei* as an Inſtrument in God's Hands, and therefore took all his Abuſes patiently, out of a Conſciouſneſs of his Sinfulneſs, and a Reverence to that Deity, who had brought him ſo low, as to deſerve the Inſults of this vile *Benjamite*. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† The Manner, in which *Joſephus* makes *Huſhai* anſwer *Abſalom*, is artful enough, tho' hardly becoming an honeſt Man. "There is no contending, *ſays he*, with the Will of God, and the Conſent of the People; and ſo long as you "have them on your Side, you may be ſecure of my Fidelity. It is from God, that you have receiv'd your "Kingdom; and if you can think me worthy of a Place in the Number of thoſe, you will vouchſafe to own, you "ſhall find me as true to yourſelf, as ever I was to your Father. No Man is to account the preſent State of Things "uneaſy, ſo long as the Government continues in the ſame Line, and a Son of the ſame Family ſucceeds to the "Throne." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 8.

* It is a wiſe Obſervation in *Tacitus*, *Nihil in diſcordiis civilibus feſtinatione lætius, ubi facto, potius quam conſulto, opus eſt: Ahitophel* therefore thought it highly neceſſary to make Diſpatch upon this Occaſion; becauſe he knew, that if he ſhould give the People, that had revolted from their Allegiance, Leiſure to think of what they were doing againſt their lawful Prince, he would give that Prince Time to raiſe ſome regular Troops, and thoſe, that were about him, Space to recover from their firſt Fright; *Abſalom*'s Party would dwindle into nothing, and *David*'s grow ſtronger and ſtronger: *Daret malorum pœnitentiæ, daret bonorum conſenſui; ſcelera impetu, bona concilia morâ valeſcere*, Tacit. Hiſt. lib. i. And therefore he adviſ'd Marching immediately againſt him, without giving him a Moment's Time to recover himſelf. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† There is ſomething very plauſible, and elegant too, in the Advice, which *Huſhai* gives *Abſalom*, not immediately to purſue, and fall upon *David*: *Thou knoweſt thy Father and his Men that they be mighty Men, and they be chafed in their Minds, as a Bear robbed of her Whelps in the Field*, 2 Sam. xvii. 8. Every one knows, that a Bear is a very fierce Creature; but She-Bears (as *Ariſtotle* tells us) are more fierce than the *Male*, particularly when they have young Ones, but moſt of all, when theſe young Ones are taken from them. For this Reaſon the Scripture makes frequent Uſe of this Similitude: *I will be unto them as a Lion*, ſays God, in Relation to the People of *Iſrael*, *and as a Leopard by the Way*; *I will meet them as a Bear, that is bereaved of her Whelps, and will rent the Caul of their Hearts*, Hoſea xiii. 7, 8. Vid. Prov. xvii. 12, &c. So that the Purport of *Huſhai*'s Advice is founded on this Maxim, "That we ſhould not drive an Enemy to Deſpair, nor attack thoſe, who are reſolv'd to ſell their Lives at as dear a "Rate as poſſible." *Calmet*'s Commentary.

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" be a Means to diſcourage others, and be " thought a very inauſpicious Beginning: " Whereas, if they ſtaid till a numerous " Army were come together, † they " might be aſſur'd of Victory." *Abſalom* and the reſt of the *Council* approv'd of this laſt Advice, and *Huſhai* immediately diſpatch'd two Meſſengers to *David*, acquainting him with what had paſs'd in *Council*, and adviſing him inſtantly to paſs the *Jordan*, leſt *Abſalom* ſhould change his Mind, and come and fall upon him on a ſudden.

THE *Meſſengers*, as they were making the beſt of their Way, happen'd to meet ſome of *Abſalom*'s Party, but had the good Fortune to conceal themſelves in a *Well*, until their Purſuers were return'd; and then proceeding on their Journey, came and deliver'd their Diſpatches to the King, who decamp'd by Break of Day, paſs'd the *Jordan*, and came to *Mahanaim*, a City of *Gilead*, where he was kindly receiv'd. As ſoon as *Ahitophel* heard that *David* was out of Danger, either taking it amiſs that his Counſel was ſlighted, or perceiving, by *Abſalom*'s weak Conduct, that Things were not likely to ſucceed, and he, conſequently, * liable to be expos'd to *David*'s hotteſt Indignation, for the Counſel he had already given; partly out of *Pride*, and partly out of *Fear* of worſe Torments, he went to his own Houſe, where he firſt made his *Will*, and then hang'd himſelf. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

An Engagement between the King's and Abſalom's *Party, wherein* Abſalom *is vanquiſh'd, and ſlain.*

DAVID had not been long at *Mahanaim*, before *Abſalom*, having got together a numerous Army, which was commanded by *Amaſa*, the Son of *Ithra*, a Relation of *Abſalom*'s by Marriage, left *Jeruſalem*, and paſs'd the *Jordan*, in Purſuit of his Father. The King, hearing of the Approach of his Rebel Son, and foreſeeing that a Battle was unavoidable, divided his Army into three Bodies. The firſt to be commanded by *Joab*, the ſecond by his Brother *Abiſhai*, and the third by † *Ittai*, the *Gittite*, and himſelf intended to go in Perſon with them. But, by the Importunity of the People about him, he was prevail'd with not to hazard his Perſon in Battle; and perhaps was more eaſily diſſuaded from it, becauſe the Battle was to be againſt a Son, for whom he ſtill retain'd ſo tender an Affection, that he gave the three *Generals* a ſtrict Charge, in the Hearing of the Soldiers, that (for his Sake) they ſhould uſe *Abſalom* kindly, in caſe he ſhould fall into their Hands.

THE

† The Benefits which *Huſhai* ſuggeſts from *Abſalom*'s having a large Army, are thus expreſs'd in an *hyperbolical* Way, ſuitable to the *Genius* of that inſolent young Man, to whom he gave his Advice, and therefore more likely to prevail with him: *Moreover, if he be gotten into a City, then ſhall all* Iſrael *bring Ropes to that City, and we will draw it into the River, until there be not one ſmall Stone found there*, 2 Sam. xvii. 13. Where his Meaning is, that if *David* ſhould quit the open Field, and betake himſelf to the ſtrongeſt of their Cities, encompaſs'd with high Walls and deep Ditches, ſuch a numerous Army (as he propos'd) would be ſufficient to begirt it round, and, by Ropes put about the Walls, draw them down, and all the Houſes of the City into the Ditch, that ran about it: Not that any ſuch Practice was ever us'd in War, and therefore the Words muſt be look'd upon as merely *Thraſonical*, and calculated to pleaſe *Abſalom*; unleſs we will ſay with ſome, that the Word in the Original may denote ſuch *Machines* as are work'd by *Ropes*, and were, at that Time, in uſe to batter down Walls. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

* *Joſephus* thus relates the Matter: ——— " When *Ahitophel* was come home to *Galmon*, he call'd his Family " together, and told them the Advice, which he had given *Abſalom*, but that he would not follow it, and that, in " a ſhort Time, that Refuſal would be his Ruin; for *David* would certainly baffle him, and ſoon recover his King- " dom. Now it is more honourable for me, *ſays he*, to die, aſſerting my Liberty like a Man, than to wait ſneaking " till *David* comes in again, and to be flay'd at laſt for the Services I have done the Son againſt the Father." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 9

† In 2 *Sam.* xv. 18. we read, that *all the* Gittites, *ſix hundred Men, which came after him* (viz. *David*) *from* Gath, *paſſed on before the King*; but who thoſe *Gittites* were 'tis hard to determine, becauſe we have no mention made of them, in any other Part of Scripture. Some imagine, that they were Natives of *Gath*, who, taken with the Fame of *David*'s Piety, and happy Succeſſes, came along with *Ittai*, (whom the *Jews* ſuppoſe to have been the Son of *Achiſh*, King of *Gath*) and, being *proſelyted* to the *Jewiſh* Religion, became Part of *David*'s Guard, and attended him in his Wars. But others rather think, that they were Men of *Jewiſh* Extract, but had this *additional* Name, from their fleeing unto *David* (probably under the Conduct of *Ittai*) *while he was at* Gath, and accompanying him ever after, not only in the Time of *Saul*'s Perſecution of him, but even after his Acceſſion to the *united* Kingdoms of *Judah* and *Iſrael*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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THE two Armies met in the † Wood of *Ephraim*, which belongeth to the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, where *Abſalom*'s Army, tho' much ſuperior in Number, was defeated, and put to Flight: For the *Loyaliſts* upon this Occaſion, behav'd ſo gallantly, that they kill'd † twenty Thouſand of the Rebels upon the Spot, and would doubtleſs have carry'd the Slaughter farther, had not *Abſalom* (the chief Cauſe of all this Miſchief) been taken, and ſlain.

HIS Hair (as we ſaid before) was of a prodigious Length and Largeneſs; and, as he was now in Flight from the Enemy, and riding with great Speed, under the Trees, it happen'd to * entangle itſelf on one of the Boughs in ſuch a Manner, that it lifted him off his Saddle, and his Mule running from under him, left him there hanging in the Air, and unable to diſengage himſelf.

IN this Condition a private Soldier found him, and told it unto *Joab*, who blam'd him for not having kill'd him; and when the Man, in Excuſe, urg'd the Command, which he heard the King give the *Generals*, to be very tender and careful of his Son's Life, *Joab*, looking upon all this as nothing, or as a Command fitter for a Parent, than a King, went to the Place where he was * hanging, and, having firſt given him his Death's Wound himſelf, order'd the People, which were by, to diſpatch him; and ſo went, and ſounded a Retreat to prevent any farther Effuſion of Blood, and to give *Abſalom*'s Party an Opportunity of eſcaping to their reſpective Homes. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

THUS died the wicked and rebellious *Abſalom*, and, inſtead of an honourable Interment, fit for a King's Son, his Body was taken down, and thrown into a Pit, and cover'd with an * Heap of Stones.

The

† This Wood was ſo called (as ſome imagine) becauſe the *Ephraimites* were wont to drive their Cattle over *Jordan* to feed them in it; but others (with more Probability) ſuppoſe, that it had its Name from the great Slaughter (related in *Judg.* xii.) which *Jephthah* had formerly made of the *Ephraimites* in that Place. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes.

† The Expreſſion in the Text is, *The Wood devoured more People that Day, than the Sword devoured*, 2 Sam. xviii. 8. which ſome think was occaſion'd by their falling into Pits, preſſing one another to Death in their ſtrait Places, creeping into Lurking-Holes, and there being ſtarv'd to Death, or otherwiſe devour'd by wild Beaſts, which met them in their Flight: But the moſt eaſy and ſimple Meaning of the Paſſage is, that there were more ſlain in the Wood, than in the Field of Battle. The Field of Battle (as *Joſephus* tells us, *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. cap. 9.) was a *Plain*, with a Wood contiguous to it; and therefore when *Abſalom*'s Army was put to the Rout, and betook themſelves to the Wood for Refuge, their Purſuers made a greater Slaughter of them *there*, than they otherwiſe would have done, becauſe they could not run away ſo faſt in the Wood, as they might have done in the open Field. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* The Words in the Text, indeed, make no mention of *Abſalom*'s Hair in this Place: They only inform us, that *Abſalom rode upon a Mule, and that Mule went under the thick Boughs of a great Oak, and his Head caught hold of the Oak, and he was taken up between the Heaven and the Earth, and the Mule, that was under him, went away*, 2 Sam. xviii. 9. From whence ſome infer, that the Meaning of the Hiſtorian is, not that *Abſalom* hung by his Hair, but that his Neck was ſo wedged between the Boughs, by the ſwift Motion of the Mule, that he was not able to diſengage himſelf. For it is hardly to be queſtion'd, *ſay they*, but that, when he went to Battle, he had an Helmet on; and an Helmet, which cover'd his Head, would have hinder'd his Hair from being intangled in the Boughs: But 'tis only ſuppoſing, either that his Helmet was ſuch, as left a great deal of his Hair viſible and uncover'd, or that, if it was large enough to incloſe the whole, he might, upon this Occaſion, throw it off, (as well as his other heavy Armour) to make himſelf lighter, and expedite his Flight; and then there will be no Incongruity in the common and receiv'd Opinion, to which the Authority of *Joſephus* adds ſome Confirmation, *viz.* "That, as *Abſalom* was "making his Eſcape, upon the whiffling of the Air, a ſnagged Bough of a Tree took hold of his Hair, and the Mule, "running forward from under him, left him dangling in the Air." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 9.

* *Commentators* have obſerv'd the Juſtice of God, in bringing *Abſalom* to a condign Puniſhment, and ſuch a Kind of Death, as was ordain'd by the Law for Offences, like unto his. For whereas, in the firſt Place, he was *hanged* as it were, this was declar'd by the Law to be *an accurſed Death*, Deut. xxi. 23. and was, afterwards, in ſome Meaſure, *ſtoned*; this was the particular Kind of Death, that the Law preſcrib'd for a ſtubborn and rebellious Son, *Deut.* xxi. 21.

* In the Deſcription of the *Holy-Land*, ſome Geographers tell us, that this Heap of Stones remain'd even to their Days, and that all Travellers, as they paſs'd by it, were wont to throw a Stone to add to the Heap, in Deteſtation of his Rebellion againſt his Father. For, though it became a Cuſtom among the *Greeks* to raiſe an Heap of Stones in the Place where any great Perſon was interr'd, as a Monument of Honour and Reſpect; yet it is plain, that none of *David*'s Army intended any Honour to *Abſalom*'s Memory in accumulating Stones upon him, nor can we think, that *David* himſelf (though too fond of this Rebel-Son) made any Alteration afterwards in the Form of his Burial, for

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

The OBJECTION.

" THIS indeed was the woful End " of *David*'s favourite Son and " Heir, but to his own Miſ-conduct the " *Father* might impute the Irregularities " of his Children, ſince, either by an " *over-weening* Fondneſs to them, a *tacit* " Connivance at what they did amiſs, or " an *exemplary* Encouragement given to " it by himſelf, he ſuffer'd Iniquity to " abound among them. For, after his " Adultery with *Uriah*'s Wife, (and yet, " one would think, he had Women " enough of his own) and the baſe Mur- " ther of her gallant Huſband, for which " no Excuſe, no Colour of Apology can " be made, with what Face could he re- " prove, much more chaſtize (as it de- " ſerv'd) the *inceſtuous* Rape of his Son, " *Amnon* upon the beauteous *Tamar*, or " the barbarous and bloody Revenge, " which *Abſalom* took upon this Brother " for violating his Siſter's Honour?

" HAD *David* interpos'd but his " *paternal* Authority, and puniſh'd *Am-* " *non*'s Crime with the Severity it re- " quir'd, *Abſalom*'s Reſentment had per- " haps never broke out into ſuch Violence " as it did; but where do we read of any " Puniſhment, any Diſgrace, nay, even " of any Diſcountenance, put upon *Am-* " *non* for his brutal and impious Uſage of " his Siſter? All that the Hiſtorian tells " us of the Matter is, that, *(c) when* " *King* David *heard of theſe Things, he* " *was very wroth:* But his Wrath, it " ſeems, he kept to himſelf; he ſhew'd " no Tokens of it to the *Offender*; and " therefore *Abſalom*, when he ſaw his " Father conniving at the Thing, under- " took to do himſelf Juſtice, and to " avenge the Diſhonour done to his " Family.

" IN this however he acted very wick- " edly: But then, why did not his Fa- " ther call him to an Account for it? " Why did he ſuffer him *(d)* to eſcape " into *Geſhur*, and not immediately ſend " Meſſengers to apprehend him? Inſtead " of demanding him of the King of *Ge-* " *ſhur*, in order to bring him to Juſtice, " the Hiſtorian tells us, that *(e)* the *Soul* " *of King* David *long'd to go forth unto* " Abſalom; and that, not long after, " upon a very frivolous Pretence, *viz.* the " falſe and impertinent Tale of a canting " old Woman, he took Occaſion to re- " call him; and, when he was recalled, " ſuffer'd him to launch into greater Ex- " travagancies, than ever *Prince* had done " before.

" IT is not much to be wonder'd at, " that a young Prince, of a proud, am- " bitious Spirit, with all this Impunity " and Encouragement, ſhould come at " laſt to affect the Government, and de- " poſe his Father; but certainly *David* " appears to be a very weak Man, when " he gives his *Generals* this Charge con- " cerning a Rebel in Arms againſt him; " *(f) Deal gently, for my Sake, with the*

Fear of enraging the People againſt him. Some, however, are of a quite contrary Opinion, *viz.* that *David*, who lamented him with ſuch Exceſs, remov'd him from this Pit, in order to have him laid in the Sepulchre belonging to the Kings, or perhaps ſomewhere about the Place, where the *Monument*, which goes under his Name, and, even to this Day, is ſhewn to Travellers, was dug in a Rock. It is a little Chamber, wrought with a Chiſel, out of one Piece of Rock, which ſtands at ſome Diſtance from the reſt of the Mountain, and is a Square of eight Paces from Out to Out. The *Inſide* of this Chamber is all plain, but the *Outſide* is adorn'd with ſome Pilaſters of the ſame Kind of Stone. The Upper Part, or Covering is made in the Form of a *Conick Pyramid*, pretty high and large, with a Kind of *Flower-Pot* on its Top. The Pyramid is compos'd of ſeveral Stones, but the Monument itſelf is ſquare, and all cut out of one Block. In the Time of *Joſephus*, the Monument, which was ſaid to be *Abſalom*'s, was nothing more, than one Marble Pillar, widely different from what, at preſent, goes under his Name, and which therefore muſt be accounted a more *modern* Building. *Le Clerc*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries, *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. cap. 9. and *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Abſalom*.

(c) 2 Sam. xiii. 21. *(d)* Ver. 37. *(e)* Ver. 39. *(f)* Ibid. xviii. 5.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Christ. 1055, &c.

" *young Man*, even with *Absalom*: And " *Joab* seems to be no very good *Subject*, " when, notwithstanding the King's " Command, *(g) he took three Darts in* " *his Hand, and thrust them through the* " *Heart of* Absalom. But in this he " might the rather presume upon being " pardon'd by a *Man*, who had pass'd " by his base and treacherous Murther " of *Abner*, without the least Censure, " or Rebuke.

" To be a *Terror to Evil-workers*, " even though they be our neareſt Friends " and Relations, and to be kind and " merciful to such, as behave gallantly, " even tho' they be our greatest Enemies, " are no improper Rules of Conduct in " any great Prince: And yet how very " reverse were *David*'s Actions to these, " when we find him winking at Murther " at *home*, and pursuing, with the most " exquisite Tortures, such People, as " oppos'd his Measures by fighting for " their Liberty, *abroad*.

" For what can we say, for his put- " ting the Inhabitants of *Rabbah*, as " well as the other Cities of the *Ammo-* " *nites, (h) under Saws, and under Har-* " *rows, and under Axes, and making them* " *pass through the Brick-kiln?* What shall " we say, to his making War against " *Ishbosheth*, *Saul*'s Son and Heir, when " himself *(i)* had sworn to the Father, " that he would *not cut off his Seed*, or " destroy any of his Family? What shall " we say, to his taking the Advantage of " *Abner*'s Resentment *(k)* to draw him " aside from his Master's Service, and " to enter into *League* (for the Promotion " of his own Cause) with a very wicked " Man? And lastly, what shall we say, " *(l)* to his obliging *Hushai* to use all " Manner of Falsehood to *Absalom*; to " act the *Hypocrite*, and tell innumerable " Lies, on purpose to get into his Confi- " dence, and so betray his Counsels? " These, and several other Instances, " that might be produc'd in this Period of " History, are enough to convince us, " that, how much soever *David*'s Piety " and Righteousness may be extoll'd by " some; in his *publick* Capacity he was a " *weak* Prince, and, in his *private*, a *bad* " Ruler of his Family; *partial* to his " Friends, *cruel* to his Enemies, *false* to " his Promises, *unjust* in his Distributions, " and *deceitful* in his Transactions with " Mankind; *guilty* of Murther and " Adultery himself, and a *tame* Con- " niver at those, who committed the like " Offences. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

" But well may the *Historian* leave " these Imputations upon *David*'s Cha- " racter, when he is not afraid to load " *Almighty* God with an Accusation of " *captious* Cruelty. For what less can " we call *(m)* his *striking* Uzzah *dead* " upon the Spot, merely for putting out " his Hand, and laying hold on the Ark, " (which, some would be apt to think, " proceeded from Respect and Reverence, " more than any Profanation of it) when, " by the Stumbling of the Oxen, it was in " Danger of being overturn'd; and when " he is not asham'd to relate such incon- " gruous and incredible Things, *(n) as* " *the Sound of Men*'s marching upon the " *Tops of Mulberry-Trees*; as *(o)* the ex- " travagant Story of a *Crown (worn by the* " *King of* Rabbah, and afterwards by " *David)* which weigh'd an hundred and " twenty-five Pounds, more than any " human Neck could bear; and of *(p)* " an Head of Hair belonging to *Absalom*, " whose very *Clippings* came to no less " than four Pounds, and two Ounces of " our Weight; with some other *Absur-* " *dities* of the like Nature?"

Answer'd, by shewing why David *had so many Wives.*

DAVID, no doubt, was a very fond Father to his Children, and a tender Husband to his Wives: Of these, it must be own'd, he had too many, *eighteen* in Number, if we will reckon his *Concubines* into that *Relation*, which, in those Days, did not much differ from the *other*, except in some Rites and Solemnities of Marriage,

(g) 2 Sam. xviii. 14. *(h)* Ibid. xii. 31. *(i)* 1 Sam. xxiv. 21, 22. *(k)* 2 Sam. iii. 13. *(l)* Ibid. xv. 34. *(m)* Ibid. vi. 7. *(n)* Ibid. v. 24. *(o)* Ibid. xii. 30. *(p)* Ibid. xiv. 26.

A. M. 2919, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

riage. But, as *Polygamy* was then tolerated among the *Jews*, *(q)* and the Prohibition of *a King's multiplying Wives to himſelf* does no where limit the Number of them, *David* might conceive, that this *Polygamy* was no Tranſgreſſion of the Law, and thence be induc'd more readily to comply with it, in order to enlarge his Family, and attach the principal Nobility of his own Nation, as well as ſome foreign *Potentates* more cloſely to his Intereſt. *(r)* For it was always look'd upon as a Piece of *political* Wiſdom in Princes to endeavour to have many Children, that, by matching them into ſeveral powerful Families, they might have more *Supporters* of their Authority, and more Aſſiſtance, in Caſe of any Invaſion of it.

His Indulgence to his Children excus'd.

THIS however is no Part of *David*'s Commendation, how much ſoever it might tend to his Security: But that a Father ſhould be *fond* of a Son, and, in ſome Inſtances, carry that Fondneſs to Exceſs; that he ſhould be blind to his *leſſer* Faults, and always inclinable, upon proper Tokens of Repentance, to forgive the *greater*; that he ſhould love to ſee every Thing look *gay* and *handſome* about him, be liberal to his decent *Expences*, and ready to overlook ſome little *Extravagances*; that he ſhould be *uneaſy* in his Abſence, *joyous* to ſee him, and when he is in any imminent Danger, very *ſollicitous* for his Preſervation (which are all the Articles, brought againſt *David*, in Relation to his Son *Abſalom*): Theſe are Faults (if Faults they be) which every *good-natur'd* Parent, who feels the tender Propenſities of human Nature towards thoſe of *his own Fleſh*, will eaſily be induc'd to forgive: And well were it for *David*, if we could make the like *Apology* for that great Enormity of his, in the Matter of *Uriah*; but, * inſtead of attempting any Extenuation of it, we ſhall rather take Notice of the ſeveral Aggravations, which *Moraliſts* have diſcover'd in it, and of the Reaſons, for which the Spirit of God thought proper to record it in Holy Writ.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

The ſeveral Aggravations of his Crime.

TO this Purpoſe, ſome have obſerv'd, 1ſt, That, *(s)* as *David tarried at* Jeruſalem, *at the Time, when Kings went forth to Battle*, he there indulg'd himſelf in Eaſe and Luxury, (which are the Bane and Ruſt of the Mind) and ſo inſenſibly fell into thoſe looſe Deſires, which drew him into ſuch vile Perpetrations; ſo that the firſt Cauſe of his Sin was *Idleneſs*. 2d, They obſerve it, as an Aggravation of his Crime, *(t)* that he certainly knew that *Bathſheba* was another Man's Wife, and yet deliberately and adviſedly committed the Sin; nay, that ſhe was the Wife of one, who was a *Proſelyte* to the *Jewiſh* Religion, and therefore added Scandal to his Wickedneſs, or (as the Text expreſſes it) *(u) gave great Occaſion to the Enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme*. 3d, They obſerve, that there was Perfidy added to this Guilt, and a ſinful Contrivance, *(x)* in cauſing *Uriah* to be ſent for home; in receiving him with great Tokens of his Favour; and in entertaining him with *good Cheer*, that he might be the more deſirous to enjoy the Company of his Wife, and ſo have the Child, which was got in Adultery, reputed his own. 4th, They obſerve, *(y)* from *Uriah*'s Anſwer, that, had not *David*'s Heart been ſear'd, he could not but have felt a ſtrong Remorſe upon thinking how he had abus'd ſo brave a Man, and how he indulg'd himſelf in ſinful Pleaſures, while this Man, and the reſt of his Army glorioufly endur'd all Manner of Hardſhips, for

(q) Deut. xvii. 17. *(r)* *Patrick*'s Commentary on 2 *Sam.* v. 13.

* But, contrary to this, the *Jewiſh* Writers have endeavour'd to juſtify *David* in this whole Tranſaction; and, to this Purpoſe, have invented Laws and Cuſtoms, that are no where to be found, either in the Books of *Moſes*, or in the Compaſs of their Hiſtory. They pretend that *David* was marry'd to *Bathſheba* before her Huſband was dead, becauſe it was a Cuſtom, (as they ſay) for Soldiers, whenever they went to the Wars, to give their Wives a Bill of *Divorce*, and conſequently, a full Licence to marry whom they pleas'd. But 'tis in vain to attempt to excuſe this black and crying Sin in *David*, for which God ſo ſeverely puniſh'd him, and for which he himſelf was always ready to acknowledge the Divine Juſtice in ſo doing. *Calmet*'s Commentary on 2 *Sam.* xi. 27.

(s) 2 Sam. xi. 1. *(t)* Ibid. *(u)* Ibid. xii. 14. *(x)* Ibid. xi. 6, &c. *(y)* Ibid. xi. 11.

A. M. 2949, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1035, &c.

for the Service of their Country. 5th, They obſerve, *(z)* from his Deſign upon *Uriah*'s Life, when he could not otherwiſe conceal his Lewdneſs, how naturally one Sin paves the Way to another, and how, in a ſmall Compaſs of Time, the *Faſcination* of ſenſual Appetites is enough to change the very Nature of Mankind; ſince even he, who formerly ſpar'd *Saul*, unjuſtly ſeeking his Life, is now put upon contriving the Death of a very faithful Servant, in a very baſe and unworthy Manner. 6th, They obſerve it, as a farther Aggravation of his Crime of Murther, that he not only expos'd an innocent and faithful Servant to be kill'd, but that, together with him, *(a)* ſeveral more brave Men, *ſet in the Front of the Battle*, where the Service was hotteſt, muſt neceſſarily have fallen in the Attack; ſo blind was he to the *publick Good*, and ſo prodigal of his Subjects Lives, if he might but cover his Guilt, and gratify his Luſt. 7th, They obſerve, *(b)* from his Anſwer to the Meſſengers, ſent by *Joab* to acquaint him with *Uriah*'s Death, *viz. the Sword devoureth one, as well as another*, the vile Hypocriſy and Obdurateneſs of his Heart, imputing that to the *Chance* of War, or rather to the Direction of *Divine Providence*, which his Conſcience could not but tell him, was of his own *Contrivance*. 8th, and laſtly, they obſerve, *(c)* from his Marriage with *Bathſheba*, even before her Huſband was cold in his Grave, how the Eagerneſs of his indulg'd Appetite had now extinguiſh'd (what in ſome Sinners is laſt of all parted with, and for which he himſelf had lately embru'd his Hands in Blood) all Senſe of Shame and Regard to Reputation, or Decency.

Why they are recorded in Scripture.

These are ſome of the Aggravations obſervable in *David*'s Crime, which (beſides his Luſt and Cruelty) is loaded with too juſt an Imputation of Perfidy, of Ingratitude, of Hypocriſy, of Deliberation, of Obſtinacy, and of Shameleſſneſs in Sin: And for theſe Purpoſes were they recorded in Scripture, that they might teach us the Frailty of human Nature, and how liable the beſt of Men are, in ſome Inſtances of their Lives, to be overtaken with very groſs Faults: That they might ſhew us the natural Gradation of one Sin to another, and that, when once we have ſuffer'd our Appetites to *out-ray*, in a ſhort Time it will not be in our Power to ſet Bounds to them, would we never ſo fain: That they might caution us againſt Sloth and Idleneſs, againſt indulging any inordinate Paſſion, or gazing upon any Objects, that may endanger our Innocence: That they might remind us all, how much we ſtand in need continually of the Divine Aſſiſtance, and therefore how much we are concern'd to *pray with all Prayer and Supplication*, and to *watch*, as well as *pray*, that we *fall into no Temptation*: And laſtly, that they might inculcate that excellent Precept which the Apoſtle has laid down in theſe Words; —— *(d) Brethren, if any Man be overtaken in a Fault, ye, that are ſpiritual, reſtore ſuch an one in the Spirit of Meekneſs, conſidering thyſelf, leſt thou alſo be tempted.*

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

Why David *did not puniſh* Amnon.

One pernicious Conſequence of *David*'s Tranſgreſſion very likely was, that it made him timorous in inflicting Puniſhments upon others; but the Reaſon which *Joſephus* aſſigns for his not chaſtiſing *Amnon* for his *inceſtuous* Rape, *viz. becauſe he was his eldeſt Son, and he loved him, and would not diſpleaſe him*, is a groundleſs Calumny, and mere Fiction; for *(e)* ſince the ſacred Hiſtory has thought fit to be ſilent in this Matter, no one can tell what his Father either ſaid, or did to him. The true Reaſon therefore, as we ſuppoſe, why his Father did not proceed with Severity againſt him, was, becauſe the Caſe (as it then ſtood) was *intricate* and *perplext*, and ſuch as the Law had made no Proviſion for. The Law concerning *Rapes* is worded thus; —— *(f) If a Damſel, that is a Virgin, be betrothed unto a Huſband, and a Man find her in the City, and lie*

(z) 2 Sam. xi. 15. (a) Ibid. ver. 15. (b) Ibid. ver. 25. (c) Ibid. ver. 27. (d) Gal. vi. 1.
(e) *Le Clerc*'s Commentary on 2 *Sam.* xiii. 21. (f) Deut. xxii. 23, &c.

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lie with her; then ye ſhall bring them both out unto the Gate of the City, and ye ſhall ſtone them with Stones that they die: The Damſel, becauſe ſhe cried not, being in the City; and the Man, becauſe he hath humbled his Neighbour's Wife: And again, *If a Man find a Damſel, that is a Virgin, which is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found; then, the Man, that lay with her, ſhall give unto the Damſel's Father, fifty Shekels of Silver, and ſhe ſhall be his Wife, becauſe he hath humbled her; he may not put her away all his Days.* Theſe are the two principal Laws concerning this Matter, but neither come up to the Caſe now before us. For, had *David* puniſh'd *Amnon*'s Crime with Death, as the former Law requires, *Tamar*, in like Manner muſt have ſuffer'd too, (even tho' ſhe was innocent) becauſe *ſhe cried not out*; and tho' ſhe was not a *betroth'd Damſel*, as the Caſe is put in the latter Law) yet *David* could not compel *Amnon* to marry her, becauſe ſuch a Marriage would have been *inceſtuous*; and therefore we may ſuppoſe, that tho' *David* might reprimand his Son very ſeverely for having *wrought Folly in* Iſrael, yet he could not bring him before a publick Judicature, becauſe the Law did not properly extend to his Caſe, or, if he had made it extend, the Innocent muſt have ſuffer'd with the Guilty; and *(g)* a Rule of Equity I think it is, rather to let the *Guilty* eſcape, than that the Innocent and Injur'd ſhould be deſtroy'd.

Nor Abſalom *for murthering him.*

THE *ſacred* Hiſtorian has taken Care to clear *David* from any baſe Connivance at *Abſalom*'s Wickedneſs in murthering his Brother *Amnon*, by telling us, that as ſoon as he had done it *(h) he fled and went to Talmai*, his Grand-Father by his Mother's Side, who was then King of *Geſhur*. *Geſhur* was a City in *Syria*, which lay on the other Side of *Jordan*; and *Abſalom*, who meditated the Murther of his Brother, and could not but foreſee that it would be an Act of high Diſpleaſure to his Father, invited the *Princes of the Blood* to his Country-Seat, which was *(i)* near the City *Ephraim*, not far from the River *Jordan*, that he might have a better Opportunity, not only for putting in Execution his wicked Deſign, but of making his Eſcape likewiſe: So that *David* (had he been ever ſo much minded) could not poſſibly have apprehended him, before he had got to a ſafe Retreat; and where it is eaſy to imagine, he would tell his Tale ſo well, as to gain his Grandfather's Protection, if not Approbation of the Fact, which, with a ſmall Share of Eloquence, might be ſo ſet off, as to appear a neceſſary Vindication of the Honour of their Family, which had been ſo groſsly violated.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

THE Law of God indeed is very expreſs: ——*(k) Whoſoever ſheddeth Man's Blood, by Man ſhall his Blood be ſhed; (l)* neither *ſhall ye take any Satisfaction for the Life of a Murtherer, which is guilty of Death, but he ſhall ſurely be put to Death.* Whereby it appears, that the Supreme Magiſtrate was oblig'd to execute Juſtice upon all wilful Murtherers without any Reſervation; nor had *David* any Power to diſpenſe with God's Laws, or to ſpare thoſe, whom he had commanded him to deſtroy. But then it muſt be conſider'd, that the Affront, which *Amnon* put upon *Abſalom*, was very great and heinous; that *Abſalom*, at this Time, was out of the Reach of *David*'s Juſtice, and ſo would have continu'd, had he not obtain'd a Promiſe of Impunity; that, by living an Exile in an *heatheniſh* Country, *David* had Reaſon to apprehend, that his Son was in Danger of being infected with their wicked and *idolatrous* Practices, and was therefore the rather inclin'd to recal him; and that the Clamours and Importunities of the People, which *Joab* procur'd this Woman of *Tekoah* to repreſent to the King in a very free and artful Manner, did almoſt compel him to do it: For, what he ſaid in the Caſe of *Joab*'s Murther of *Abner*, viz. that he could not revenge it, becauſe

Why he recalled him.

 (m) the

(g) The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*. *(h)* 2 Sam. xiii. 37. *(i)* Ibid. ver. 23. Vide John xi. 54. *(k)* Gen. ix. 6. *(l)* Numb. xxxv. 31.

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(m) the Sons of Zeruiah *were too hard for him*; the like very probably, might have been ſaid in this Caſe, where the People's Hearts were ſo ſtrongly, and ſo univerſally ſet upon *Abſalom*; and that the rather, becauſe his long Baniſhment mov'd their Pity, and his Abſence made them more impatient for his Return. The Eyes of all, in ſhort, were upon him, as the next Heir, as a wiſe, and gallant, and amiable Prince, unhappy only in this Inſtance of killing *Amnon*, for which he had a ſufficient Provocation; and therefore, to ſatisfy the Cries of the People, as well as to provide for the Security of his Kingdom, which ſeem'd to depend on the Eſtabliſhment of the Succeſſion in *Abſalom*, *David* was oblig'd to forgive him, and recal him.

And let him live ſplendidly.

And, when he was recall'd, and re-inſtated in the King's Favour, 'tis no Wonder that a young Prince, of his gay Temper, ſhould multiply his *Attendants*, and ſet up a rich *Equipage*, to attract the Eyes and Admiration of Mankind; or that his Father, whoſe Riches ſo well enabled him to bear the Expence of this Magnificence, and whoſe Heart rejoic'd perhaps to ſee his Son the *Favourite* of the People, did not reſtrain him in it; becauſe a Man of an open Spirit himſelf loves to ſee his Children make a Figure in Life, which, in all *Eaſtern* Countries, was a Thing cuſtomary, and might here more eſpecially be expected in the *eldeſt*, and Heir *preſumptive* to the Crown.

And deſir'd his Life to be ſpar'd.

(n) Some of the *Jewiſh* Doctors tell us, that, how indulgent ſoever *David* might be to his Son *Abſalom*, he never intended him for his Succeſſor in the Kingdom; that he had all along made a Promiſe to *Bathſheba*, his favourite Queen, (which Promiſe, tho' *(o)* recorded later in the Hiſtory, might at firſt come to *Abſalom*'s Ear) that her Son *Solomon* ſhould ſucceed in the Regal Dignity; and that *Abſalom*, both from a Conſciouſneſs of his own Demerits, and of the *Superiority* of Wiſdom and Piety, that appear'd in *Solomon*, perceiving that his Father intended to poſtpone him, and inſtate the other, enter'd into this Rebellion, in order to aſſert his *Birth-right* to the Crown. But the Fault in *David* was not any Excluſion of Right, but too blind an Indulgence to his Son, even while he was in Arms againſt him, ready to kill, and reſolv'd to depoſe him: *Spare ye the young Man*, ſays he; and this he might deſire, partly from a Conſciouſneſs of his own Sin in the Caſe of *Uriah*, which was the *meritorious* and *procuring* Cauſe of the Rebellion, in which his Son was unhappily engag'd; partly from a Conſideration of his *Youth*, which is commonly fooliſh and giddy, and ſubject to evil Counſels, and therefore deſerv'd Pity; and partly from a Senſe of Piety in himſelf, as being unwilling that he ſhould be cut off in a ſinful Rebellion, without any Space, or Means of Repentance. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

And why Joab might think proper to kill him.

These might be ſome of the Reaſons, that made *David* give his Army ſo ſtrict a Charge, not to kill his Son, in Caſe they ſhould take him: But *Joab* had quite different Sentiments of the Matter. He perceived, that there could be no Safety to the King, nor Peace to the Kingdom, no Security to himſelf, or other loyal Subjects, as long as *Abſalom* lived; that, notwithſtanding this unnatural Rebellion, the King was ſtill inclinable to forgive him, and that there would always be ſome unquiet People, that would be moving freſh Diſturbances, in order to ſet him on the Throne. Looking upon this Charge therefore, as an Order, more proper for a *Parent*, than a *Prince*, he adventured to diſobey it. For he thought with himſelf, *(p)* that the King ought not to be obſerv'd in an Affair, wherein he ſhew'd more Regard to his *private* Paſſion, than to the *publick* Good; that Fathers ſhould always ſacrifice their *paternal* Tenderneſs to the Intereſt of the Government; and that, as *Abſalom* had forfeited his Life to the Laws upon ſeveral Accounts,

(m) 2 Sam. iii. 39. *(n)* *Pool's* Annotations on 2 *Sam.* xv. 7. *(o)* 1 Kings i. 30. *(p)* *Calmet's* Commentary on 2 *Sam.* xiii. 14.

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counts, it was but Juſtice now to take this Opportunity of diſpatching him, as an Enemy to his King and Country: But whether, in this Act of Diſobedience to the Royal Command, *Joab* is perfectly to be vindicated, we ſhall not pretend to determine. 'Tis certain, that he was a Perſon of a bold Temper, high Paſſions, and fiery Reſentments; that valued himſelf upon the Services, he had done the King, and ſeemed not to be much afraid of his Authority.

Why David *did not puniſh him for the Murther of* Abner.

THE Complaint, which *David* makes to ſome of his Courtiers, upon this *General*'s murthering the famous *Abner*, declares the true Reaſon, why he could not, at that Time, put the Laws in Execution againſt him: —— *(q) Know ye not*, ſays he, *that there is a Prince, and a great Man fallen this Day in* Iſrael? *And I am this Day weak, tho' anointed King; and theſe Men, the Sons of* Zeruiah, *be too hard for me: The Lord ſhall reward the Doer of Evil according to his Wickedneſs. Joab* was *David*'s Siſter's Son, or Nephew, *(r)* who had ſtuck cloſe to him in all his Adverſity, an excellent Soldier himſelf, and a Man of great Power and Authority among the Army; ſo that had *David* immediately called him to *Juſtice* for this vile Act againſt *Abner*, ſuch was his Intereſt among the *Soldiery*, that he ſoon would have cauſed a Mutiny or Revolt, and found a Means to ſhock or unhinge the Government, that was not, as yet, ſufficiently eſtabliſhed. It was a Point of Prudence therefore in *David*, to delay the Puniſhment of ſo powerful, and ſo perilous a Man, until a more convenient Seaſon, and only, for the preſent, to expreſs his Deteſtation of the Deed, by commending the *Deceas'd*, condemning the *Murther*, and commanding the *Murtherer* (by Way of *Penance)* to attend the *Funeral* in Sackcloth, and other Enſigns of Mourning.

SO far is *David* from *winking* at *Abner*'s Murther, that we find him burying him with great Solemnity, and making mournful Lamentation over his Grave; praiſing his Valour, and other great Qualities publickly, and curſing the Author of his untimely Death: *(s) I, and my Kingdom*, ſays he, *are guiltleſs before the Lord for ever from the Blood of* Abner, *the Son of* Ner: *Let it reſt on the Head of* Joab, *and on all his Father's Houſe, and let there not fail from the Houſe of* Joab *one, that hath an Iſſue, or that is a Leper, or that leaneth on a Staff, or that falleth on the Sword, or that lacketh Bread.*

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

Why he was ſo cruel to the Ammonites.

BUT what *Apology* ſhall we make for his treating the *Ammonites* ſo inhumanly, and putting them to ſuch exquiſite Torments, only for a ſmall Indignity, which a young King, at the Inſtigation of ſome evil Counſellors, put upon his *Embaſſadors*, ſince there ſeems to be no Proportion between the *Affront* and the *Revenge*, between the one's having their *Beards* and *Clothes* cut a little ſhorter, and the other's being *put under Saws and Harrows*, or thrown into hot burning Furnaces? Had *David* indeed been the Inventor of ſuch frightful Puniſhments, we might have juſtly reckon'd him a Man of the ſame cruel and brutal Spirit, as was *Caligula*, who, in After-Ages, (as *(t) Suetonius* tells us) was wont to take a great Delight in inflicting them: But, the Truth is, that theſe were the Puniſhments, which the *Ammonites* inflicted upon the *Jews*, whenever they took them Priſoners; and therefore *David*, when he conquer'd their Country, and reduc'd their *capital* City, us'd them with the like Cruelty: Not every one of them *indiſcriminately*, but ſuch only as appear'd in Arms againſt him, and had either advis'd, or approv'd the Advice of putting ſuch a Diſgrace upon his Meſſengers.

THE *Ammonites*, 'tis certain, were early initiated into all the Cruelties of the People of *Canaan*: When they infeſted *Jabeſh-Gilead*, and the Beſieg'd made an Offer to ſurrender,

(q) 2 Sam. iii. 38. *(r) Patrick*'s Commentary on 2 *Sam.* iii. 39. *(s)* 2 Sam. iii. 28, 29.
(t) Cap. xxvii.

A. M. 2919. &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055. &c.

ſurrender, the eaſieſt Condition that they would grant them, was, that they might *(u) thruſt out all their right Eyes, and lay it for a Reproach upon* Iſrael *for ever*; which one Inſtance, as I take it, is in the Room of ten Thouſand Proofs, to demonſtrate, that theſe *Ammonites* were Monſters of Barbarity; and that therefore King *David* was no more culpable for retaliating upon them the ſame Cruelties, that they us'd to inflict on *others*, than the People of *Agragentum* were, for burning *Phalaris* in his own *Bull*, or *Theſeus* the Hero, for ſtretching *Procraſtes* beyond the Dimenſions of his own *Bed*. For even *Heathen* Caſuiſts have determin'd, that no Law can be more juſt and equitable, than that, which decreed *Artiſts of Cruelty to periſh by their own Arts*.

The particular Puniſhment of *paſſing through the Brick-Kilns*, an ingenious *(x)* Author ſeems fairly to account for, by making this Conjecture. —— "It is very "well known, ſays he, that the *Jews* "were Slaves in *Egypt*, and particularly "employ'd in Brick-making. Now it is "natural for all People at Enmity to "reproach one another with the Meanneſs "and Baſeneſs of their Original. As "therefore the *Ammonites* were a cruel "and inſolent Enemy, and nothing could "be more natural for Men of their Tem-"per, when they had got any *Jews* in "their Power, than to cry out, *ſend the* "*Slaves to the Brick-Kilns, and ſo tor-*"*ture them to Death*; ſo nothing could "be more natural than for the *Jews*, "when they got an Advantage over "them, to return them the ſame Treat-"ment." However this be, 'tis certain that the Siege of *Rabbah* began before *David* had any criminal Commerce with *Bathſheba*, and if the Town was not taken till after *Solomon*'s Birth, (as the Sequel of his Hiſtory ſeems to imply) the Siege muſt laſt for about two Years; in which Time, upon the Suppoſition that *David* continu'd in an obdurate State of Sin and Impenitence, and was therefore depriv'd of that mild and merciful Spirit, for which he had formerly been ſo remarkable; there is no Wonder, if being now become cruel and hard-hearted, as well as exaſperated with the Length of the Siege, he treated the *Ammonites* in the ſame outrageous Manner, that they were accuſtom'd to treat his Subjects, not only to *retaliate* the Thing upon them, but to deter all future Ages likewiſe from violating the *Right of Nations*, by treating the Perſons of publick Embaſſadors with Contempt. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

That the Rights of *Embaſſadors* are guarded by all Laws, both Divine and Human, and that therefore a Violation of theſe Rights is not only unjuſt, but impious, is the general Sentiments of all the moſt able *(y)* Writers upon the Laws and Conſtitutions of *Civil* Government. So tender were the *Romans* in this particular, *(z)* that they appointed twenty *Feciales* (as they call'd thoſe Officers) to inſpect their good Uſage, and preſerve their Immunities; to make them immediate Reparation, when any Injury was done them; and, in Caſe of a *perſonal* Affront or Indignity, to deliver up the Offender, even tho' he were a Noble or a *Patrician* by Birth, into the Hands of the Nation, from whence the Embaſſador came, to be treated by them, as they thought fit. And therefore, we need leſs wonder, that King *David*, who in all his Actions was a nice Obſerver of every Punctilio in *publick* Honour, ſhould reſent, in ſo high a Manner, an Indignity, the greateſt that could be offer'd, put upon his *Miniſters*, and from them reflecting upon his own Majeſty, merely for ſending a kind Compliment of *Condolence* to a fooliſh Prince, (as he prov'd) upon the Death of a very worthy Father.

How he kept his Promiſe with Saul.

A Man ſo *zealous* for his own Honour as well as for the Right of Nations, in his *publick* Capacity, can hardly be preſum'd to be an Abettor of *Perfidy* in his more *private*. We muſt therefore ſuppoſe, that

(u) 1 Sam. xi. 2. *(x)* The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*. *(y)* Vide *Grotius*, *Selden*, *Puffendorf*, &c. *(z)* *Grotius* de Jure Belli, lib. ii. cap. 18.

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that, notwithſtanding his War with *Iſhboſheth*, wherein there might happen ſome *Skirmiſhes*, he ſtill kept his Promiſe with his Father *Saul*, *not to deſtroy any of his Family*; and therefore in the whole Compaſs of the War (in which, tho' it laſted ſeven Years, we no where read of one Battle fought) he acted in the *defenſive*, not *offenſive* Part, and kept an Army by him, not to deſtroy *Saul*'s Poſterity, but merely to maintain himſelf in the Poſſeſſion of that *regal* Dignity, wherewith *Samuel*, by God's Order and Appointment, had inveſted him.

ISHBOSHETH knew very well, that *Samuel* had anointed *David*, and that God had appointed him to be his Father's Succeſſor in the whole Kingdom of *Iſrael*. And therefore his oppoſing him in an *hoſtile* Manner, was Provocation enough, one would think, had not *David* remember'd *(a)* his Oath made to *Saul*, and thereupon overlook'd this ill Treatment of his Son, and pronounc'd him a *(b) righteous Perſon*. The Removal of an Adverſary, and dangerous Competitor for a Crown, might be thought a meritorious Piece of Service by ſome ambitious Princes; but *David* was of another Sentiment. His Soul and his Notions were the ſame, as what inſpir'd the great *Alexander*, when he took Vengeance on *Baſſus* for having kill'd his Enemy *Darius*; *(c)* for he did not conſider *Darius*, ſo much in the Capacity of an Enemy, as *Baſſus* in that of a Friend to the Perſon, whom he had baſely murther'd. And it is not improbable, that his Reflection upon the ſad Fate of *Saul*'s unhappy Family, and the ſolemn Promiſe he had given for their Preſervation, as well as the Deſign *(d)* of clearing himſelf from the leaſt Suſpicion of having any Hand in this barbarous Regicide, prevail'd with *David* to inflict upon the Authors of it the exemplary Puniſhment of hanging them upon Gibbets, to be a Spectacle of Abhorrence; of *cutting off their right Hands*, *(e)* wherewith they had committed this execrable Deed, and of *cutting off their Feet*, wherewith they had made their Eſcape from Juſtice.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

ABNER indeed acted very baſely, very treacherouſly, in deſerting *Iſhboſheth* (the King whom he had ſet up) upon a very ſlight Provocation; but *David* had no Concern in all this. The Kingdom belong'd to him by *Divine* Donation. *Abner* knew this, before he proclaim'd *Iſhboſheth*; and therefore all the Miſchiefs of the *civil* War are chargeable upon him: Nor can *David* be blam'd for receiving his own Right, even tho' it was tender'd to him by the Hand of a bad Man. The Truth is, *David* did not delude *Abner* from his Maſter, but *Abner* made the firſt Overture of his Service to him; and as this was no unfavourable Opportunity of uniting the two contending Kingdoms, which Providence ſeem'd to have thrown in his Way, *David* had been perfidious, not only to his own Intereſt, but to the Eſtabliſhment of the general Peace of the Nation, had he not fallen in with it. *(f)* He, no doubt, was privy to the Cauſe of *Abner*'s Diſguſt: But, without approving either of his Crime or his Treaſon, he might lawfully make uſe of the *Traitor*; nay, and confer on him ſome Tokens of his Favour too, in Conſideration of the Benefits he had receiv'd from him, and of ſome commendable Qualities, either *natural* or *political*, that he had obſerv'd in him. The Inſtrument is not to be regarded in all Actions, and even a bad Man, when he does good Services, may merit a Reward, and be receiv'd with ſome Approbation.

Why he might make uſe of Abner's *Offer.*

NO Man indeed ſhould engage another in a baſe or wicked Action; *(g)* becauſe, whether he commits the Thing himſelf,

(a) 1 Sam. xxiv. 21. *(b)* 2 Sam. iv. 11. *(c)* Reputabat enim non tam hoſtem ſuum fuiſſe *Darium*, quam Amicum ejus, à quo eſſet occiſus. *Juſtin*, lib. xii. c. 6. *(d) Le Clerc*'s Commentary. *(e) Patrick*'s Commentary. *(f) Calmet*'s Commentary on 2 *Sam.* iii. 12. *(g)* Nihil intereſt, utrum ipſe Sceluſ admittas, an alium propter te admittere velis. *Auguſt. in Moribus Manichæ.*

A. M. 2944, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1055, &c.

or employs another to do it, the Crime is the ſame; but it is not ſo (ſays *(b) Grotius)* if a Perſon freely offers himſelf, without any Sollicitation or Perſuaſion to it. In this Caſe, it is not unlawful to uſe him as an Inſtrument, in order to execute what is confeſſedly lawful for us to do: And, as it is not contrary to the Laws of Arms to receive a *Deſerter*, who quits the Enemy's Party and embraces Ours; ſo we cannot perceive, how *David* could become culpable in taking the Advantage of *Abner*'s Quarrel with *Iſhboſheth*, when, without any Application of his, he voluntarily ſent to him, and offer'd him his Service, and when the good Providence of God ſeems to have employ'd the Paſſion and angry Reſentment of that haughty *General*, in order to bring about his wiſe Deſigns, and, by the Union of the two Kingdoms, prevent the Effuſion of much Blood.

His employing Huſhai *to ſupplant* Abſalom.

But what ſhall we ſay in Excuſe for his *Perfidy*, when we find him putting his Friend *Huſhai* upon acting ſuch a Part, as but badly became a Man of Honour; upon going and offering his Service to his Son *Abſalom*, on purpoſe to betray him, or to give him bad Counſel. The Words of *David* are theſe:——*(i) If thou return to the City, and ſay unto* Abſalom, *I will be thy Servant, O King; as I have been thy Father's Servant hitherto, ſo will I now alſo be thy Servant; then mayſt thou for me defeat the Counſels of* Ahitophel. But *David*, by theſe Words, (ſay ſome Interpreters) did not adviſe *Huſhai* to betray *Abſalom*, or, for his Sake, to violate the Laws of Friendſhip, but purely to go and adjoin himſelf to *Abſalom*, (who, by this Time, had aſſum'd the Title of King, and could not properly be addreſs'd to without calling him ſo) in order to deſtroy the Counſels of *Ahitophel*, juſt as a General ſends his Spies into the Enemy's Camp, to know what paſſes there; or as a King keeps in foreign Courts his Envoys, to gain Intelligence of the Deſigns, that may be form'd againſt him, and to defeat the Reſolutions, that may be taken to his Prejudice. But (whether theſe Compariſons may come up to the Caſe before us, or no) 'twas certain, at this Juncture, *Abſalom*'s Buſineſs was to be upon his Guard. The unjuſt War, which he had declar'd againſt his Father, gave his Father a Right to treat him as an *open* Enemy, and to employ either Force or Artifice againſt him; nor can this Conduct of his be blam'd, unleſs we ſhould ſay, that, when Kings are engag'd in War, they are forbidden to diſguiſe their true Deſigns, even tho' it be a Thing notorious, that upon this Diſguiſe the Practice of *Stratagems* in War (which were never yet accounted unlawful) is entirely founded.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

The Truth is, *(k) Abſalom*, as a Traitor, a Murtherer, a Rebel, and, as far as in him lay, a Parricide, had forfeited all the Rights of Society, but more eſpecially, as a Rebel: For a Rebel, who ſets himſelf to overturn the eſtabliſh'd Government, Order, and Peace of any Community, does by that hoſtile Attempt actually diveſt himſelf of all ſocial Rights in that Community. And conſequently, *David* could be no more guilty of Perfidy, in forming a Deſign to ſupplant *Abſalom*, nor *Huſhai* guilty of Villainy, in undertaking to put it in Execution, than that Man can be ſaid to be guilty of Sin, who deceives a Mad-Man, and turns him away from murthering his beſt Friends.

And Huſhai's *undertaking to do it.*

The Short of the Matter is, *Huſhai*'s Inſtructions, were to negotiate *David*'s Intereſt among the Rebels, as well as he could. This he could not do without ſeeming to act in a contrary Character; and, in Order to effect this, there was a Neceſſity for his concealing himſelf; and conceal himſelf he could not, without ſome Degree of *Diſſimulation*; and therefore, the *End* which he propos'd in what he did, *viz.* the Prevention of that long Train of Miſchiefs which always attends a *Civil* War, was ſufficient to juſtify the *Means*

(b) De Jure Belli, lib. iii. cap. 1. Transfugam jure Belli recipimus. *Grotius.* *(i)* 2 Sam. xv. 34. *(k)* The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III.

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Means which he took to accompliſh it. For, tho' it is to be wiſh'd with *(l) Cicero*, that *all Lying* and *Diſſimulation* were *utterly baniſhed from human Life*; yet, as others have maintain'd, that a *beneficial Falſehood is better than a deſtructive Truth*, a Caſe may be ſo circumſtantiated, as to make Diſſimulation, which (as *(m)* Lord *Bacon* ſays) *is nothing elſe but a neceſſary Dependant upon Silence, highly neceſſary*; *and a Lye, which otherwiſe would be blameable in a Slave, will deſerve Commendation*, (ſays *(n) Quintilian*) *when a wiſe Man makes Uſe of it, to ſave his Country by deceiving his Enemy.* Now, as *Huſhai*'s whole Deſign was to deceive an open and declar'd Enemy, who can doubt, but that he was at full Liberty by his Addreſs and Subtlety to diſconcert the Meaſures of thoſe, whom all agree, that, had he been ſo minded, he had Licence to attack with open Violence? *(o)* To overcome an Enemy indeed by Valour, rather than Art, ſounds more gallant, and by ſome has been thought a more † reputable Way of Conqueſt; but, ſince the Laws of Nature and Arms have made no Difference, and thoſe of Humanity and Mercy ſeem to incline to that Side, wherein there is likely to be the leaſt Blood ſhed; *Huſhai* may be ſaid to have acted the worthy *Patriot*, as well as the faithful *Subject*, in breaking the Force of an unnatural Rebellion, and in putting it into his royal Maſter's Mouth to ſay, *(p) the Lord is known to execute Judgment*; *the Ungodly are trapped in the Work of their own Hands. They are ſunk down in the Pit that they made*; *in the ſame Net, which they hid privily, are their own Feet taken.*

David's Character.

THUS, tho' we are not oblig'd to vindicate *David* in every Paſſage of his Life, and think ſome of the crying Sins he was guilty of utterly inexcuſable; yet (if we except theſe) we cannot but think, that, although he was a very tender and indulgent Parent, yet he was no *Encourager* of Vice in his own Family, or a tame Conniver at it in others, had he not been reſtrain'd, by *Reaſons of State*, ſometimes from puniſhing it; that he was true to his Promiſes, juſt in his Diſtributions, and *prudent*, tho' not *crafty*, in his *military* Tranſactions; "of a ſingular Pre-"ſence of Mind, (as *(q) Joſephus* ſpeaks "of him) to make the beſt of what was "before him; and of as ſharp a Fore-"ſight for improving all Advantages, and "obviating all Difficulties, that were like "to happen;" *tender* to all Perſons in Diſtreſs, *kind* to his Friends, *forgiving* to his Enemies; and, when, at any Time, he was forc'd to uſe Severity, 'twas only in Retaliation of what other People had done to him. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

Why God ſtruck Uzzah dead.

HAPPY were it for us, if we could account for the Operations of God with the ſame Facility, that we can for the Actions of his *Saints*; but his *Counſels are a great Deep*, and his *Judgments* (juſt tho' they be) are ſometimes obſcure, and *paſt finding out*. For, what ſhall we ſay to the Fate of *Uzzah*? Or what tolerable Cauſe can we aſſign for his ſudden and untimely End? It was now near ſeventy Years ſince the *Iſraelites* had carry'd the Ark from Place to Place, and ſo long a Diſuſe had made them forget the Manner of doing it. In Conformity to what they had heard of the *Philiſtines*, they put it into a new Cart, or Waggon; but this was againſt the expreſs Direction of the Law, *(r)* which order'd it to be borne upon Men's Shoulders. It is commonly ſuppos'd, that *Uzzah* was a *Levite*, tho' there is no Proof of it from Scripture, but

(l) Offic. lib. iii. c. 15. *(m)* Serm. Fidel. lib. vi. *(n)* Quintil. Inſtit. Orat. lib. xii. c. 1. *(o) Puffendorf*'s Law of Nature, lib. iv. c. 1. and *Grotius*'s Rights of Peace, lib. iii. c. 1.

† Thus when *Perſius*, the *Macedonian* King, was deceiv'd by the Hopes of Peace, the o'd Senators diſallow'd the Act, as inconſiſtent with *Roman* Bravery; ſaying, That their Anceſtors proſecuted their Wars by Valour, not Craft, not like the ſubtle *Carthaginians*, or cunning *Grecians*, among whom it was a greater Glory to overcome their Enemies by Treachery, than true Valour. *Livy*, lib. xlii. c. 47. And it was a known Principle of *Alexander*'s, that he ſcorn'd to ſteal a *Victory*. *Plutarch. de Alex.* and *Q. Curtius*, lib. iv. c. 13.

(p) Pſal. ix. 15, 16. *(q)* Jewiſh Antiq. lib. vii. c. 12. *(r)* Numb. vii. 9.

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but ſuppoſing he was, he had no Right to attend upon the Ark; that Province, by the ſame Law, *(s)* was reſtrain'd to thoſe *Levites* only, who were of the Houſe of *Kohath:* Nay, put the Caſe he had been a *Kohathite* by Birth, yet he had violated another Command, which prohibited even theſe *Levites,* (tho' they carry'd it by Staves upon their Shoulders) *(t)* upon Pain of Death, *to touch it* with their Hands: So that here was a threefold Tranſgreſſion of the Divine Will, in this Method of Proceeding. The Ark, (as ſome ſay) by *Uzzah*'s Direction, was plac'd in a *Cart*; *Uzzah*, without any proper Deſignation, adventures to attend it; when he thought it in Danger of falling, *officiouſly* he put forth his Hand, and laid hold on it, (all Violations of the Divine Commands) and this (as is ſuppos'd) not ſo much out of Reverence to the ſacred *Symbol* of God's Preſence, as out of Diffidence of his Providence, as unable to preſerve it from overturning.

The Truth is, this Ark had ſo long continu'd in Obſcurity, that the People in a Manner had loſt all Senſe of a Divine Power reſiding in it, and therefore approach'd it with Irreverence. This is imply'd in *David*'s Exhortation to *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, after this Misfortune upon *Uzzah: (u) Ye are the chief of the Fathers of the* Levites; *ſanctify yourſelves therefore, both ye, and your Brethren, that you may bring up the Ark of the Lord God of* Iſrael, *unto the Place that I have prepared for it; for, becauſe ye did it not at the firſt, the Lord our God made a Breach upon us, for that we ſought him not after the due Order.* What Wonder then, if God, being minded to teſtify his immediate Preſence with the Ark, to retrieve the antient Honour of that ſacred *Veſſel*, and to curb all licentious Profanations of it for the future, ſhould ſingle out one, that was the moſt culpable of many, one, who in three Inſtances was then violating his Commands, to be a Monument of his Diſpleaſure againſt either a wilful Ignorance, or a rude Contempt of his Precepts, be they ever ſo ſeemingly ſmall; that, by ſuch an Example of *Terror*, he might inſpire both Prieſts and People with a ſacred *Dread* of his *Majeſty*, and a profound *Veneration* for his *Myſteries?* From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

The Meaning of the Sound in the Mulberry-Trees.

God indeed is left to his own Pleaſure, what Signs he ſhall think fit to give to his People, upon any Occaſion, for their Good; but the more *arbitrary*, and uncommon any Sign is, the more it ſeems to have proceeded from God. Tho' therefore, *the Sound of People's going upon the Tops of Trees*, be a Thing not ſo congruous to our Conceptions, yet it will not therefore follow, that it was not the *real* Sign, which God gave *David*, becauſe the ſtranger the *Phænomenon* was, the greater Aſſurance it convey'd of the Divine Interpoſition in his Favour: Nor can the *Practicableneſs* of the Thing be diſputed, ſince it was *confeſſedly* an Hoſt of Angels (who could move on the *Tops of Trees*, as well as plain Ground) that made this Noiſe of an Army's marching.

There is no Reaſon however to acquieſce in this Conſtruction only. *(x)* The Word *Beroche*, which we render *Tops*, in ſeveral Places of Scripture, ſignifies the *Beginnings* of Things likewiſe; and, in this Acceptation, the Senſe of the Sign, which God gave *David*, will be this: —— "When thou heareſt a Sound, "as it were of many Men marching at "the Entrance of the Place, where the "*Mulberry-Trees* are planted, then do "thou make ready to fall upon thine "Enemy; for this Noiſe (which is occa-"ſion'd by the Miniſtry of my Angels) "goes before thee, both to conduct thee "in thy Way, and to inject Terror into "thine Adverſaries."

But how plauſible ſoever this Interpretation may ſeem, there is ſome Reaſon to ſuſpect, that the other Word *Bochim*, which our Tranſlation calls *Mulberry-Trees*, is, in Reality, the proper Name of a Place. *(y)* The

(s) Numb. vii. 9. *(t)* Ibid. iv. 15. *(u)* 1 Chron. xv. 12, 13. *(x)* *Patrick*'s Commentary in Locum.

A. M. 2919. &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055. &c.

(y) The Prophet *Iſaiah* has a plain Alluſion to this Piece of Hiſtory, and ſeems to confirm what we here ſuggeſt. *The Lord*, ſays he, *ſhall riſe up as in Mount* Perazim; *he ſhall be wroth as in the Valley of* Gibeon; i. e. he ſhall deſtroy his Enemies, as he did the *Philiſtines* at *Baal-Perazim*, under *David*, and the *Canaanites* at *Gibeon*, under *Joſhua:* What hinders then, but that *Beroche Bochim* may ſignify the Mountains of *Bochim?* and ſo the Senſe of the Words will be, ——"When thou "heareſt a Noiſe, as of many People "marching upon the Hills, or High-"Places of *Bochim*, then thou haſt no-"thing to do but to fall immediately "upon the Enemy." Either of theſe Interpretations clears the Text from any ſeeming Abſurdity; and I ſhall only obſerve farther, that, from the Paſſage of the above cited Prophet, as well as ſome Expreſſions in the xviii Pſal. ſuch as, *(z) He ſent out his Arrows, and ſcattered them; he caſt forth Lightnings, and deſtroyed them*; it ſeems very likely, that a mighty Storm of Thunder and Lightning, of *Hail-ſtones and Coals of Fire*, (as the *Pſalmiſt* calls it) was aſſiſtant to *David* in the Acquiſition of this Victory.

The Weight of the King of Rabbah's *Crown accounted for.*

IN the Account of *David*'s Conqueſt of the *Ammonites*, the Weight of their King's Crown ſeems not a little monſtrous. The Weight of a Talent, which, upon the loweſt Computation, amounts to no leſs than 123 Pounds, is allow'd to be two much for one Neck to ſuſtain; but then we ſhould conſider, that beſides the Crown, that was uſually worn, it was cuſtomary in ſome Nations, for Kings to have * vaſt large ones, (even to a Size equal to this) either hung, or ſupported over the Throne, where, at their Coronation, or upon other ſolemn Occaſions, they were wont to ſit. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

THE *Jewiſh* Doctors indeed have a very odd Conceit, *viz.* that *David*, when he took this Crown from the King of *Ammon*, hung it up on high by a certain Load-Stone, that he had; as if the Power of the *Magnet* were to attract Gold, as well as Iron. But let that be as it will, 'tis but to ſuppoſe, that the Crown, here under Debate, was of this larger Kind, and that, by ſome Means or other, it was ſupported over the King's Head, while he was ſitting on his Throne, and then there will be an apparent Reaſon, *for taking the Crown from off*, or (as the *Hebrew* Words will bear it) *from over the King's Head*, and *placing it*, in like Manner, *over* David's *Head*, even to indicate the Tranſlation of his Kingdom to *David*.

(a) 'TIS a common Thing however in *Hebrew*, as well as other learned Languages, to have the ſame Word ſignify both the Weight and Value of any Thing. And that the Price or Worth of the Crown is here the Meaning of the Phraſe, we have the more Reaſon to think, becauſe Mention is made of an Addition of precious Stones, which are never eſtimated by the Weight of Gold. *(b) Joſephus* tells us of one Stone of great Value in the Middle of the Crown, which he calls a *Sardonyx*; and as we may ſuppoſe, that there were other Jewels of ſeveral Kinds, plac'd at their proper Diſtances, theſe, in Proportion as they heighten'd the Value, muſt leſſen the Weight of the Crown, and verify what the ſame Hiſtorian

(y) Iſaiah xxviii 21. *(z)* Pſal. xviii. 14.

* The Antients make mention of ſeveral ſuch large Crowns as theſe, which were made for Sight more than any Thing elſe. *Juvenal*, expoſing the Pride and Vanity of ſome of the chief Magiſtrates at *Rome*, deſcribes the Pomp and Splendor of their Appearance in theſe Words:

Quod ſi vidiſſet prætorem in curribus altis
Extantem, & medio ſublimem in pulvere circi,
In tunicâ Jovis, & pictæ ſerrana ferentem
Ex humeris aulæa togæ, *magnæque coronæ*
Tantum orbem, quanto cervix non ſufficit ulla. Sat. 10.

Athenæus (lib. v. c. 8.) deſcribes a Crown made of Gold, that was four and twenty Feet in Circumference, and mentions others, that were two, ſome four, and ſome five Feet deep; as *Pliny*, (lib. xxxiii. c. 3.) in like Manner, takes Notice of ſome, that were of no leſs than eight Pound Weight. *Calmet*'s Comment. in Locum.

(a) Pool's Annotations and *Patrick*'s Commentary in Locum. *(b)* Jewiſh Antiq. lib. vii. c. 7.

A. M. 2919, &c. Ant. Chrif. 1055, &c.

Hiſtorian tells us of it, *viz. that* David *wore it conſtantly on his Head afterwards for an Ornament.*

And of Abſalom's *Head of Hair.*

THERE is another Difficulty ſtill behind, which relates to the Weight of *Abſalom*'s Hair, that, in the Words of the Text, is thus expreſs'd: —— *(c) And when he polled his Head, (for it was at every Year's End that he polled it; and becauſe the Hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it) he weighed the Hair of his Head at two hundred Shekels after the King's Weight.* In the Explication of which Words, the Sentiments of the Learned have been ſo many, and various, that we ſhall content ourſelves with commenting upon ſome of the chief of them.

Several Opinions concerning it.

THOSE, who are of Opinion, that the Words related only to the *Cuttings* of *Abſalom*'s Hair, make the *two hundred* Shekels the *Price*, and not the *Weight* of them: And to this Purpoſe they ſuppoſe, that tho' *Abſalom* himſelf might not ſell his Hair, yet ſome Perſons about him might do it, in Complaiſance to the Ladies of *Jeruſalem*, who might not think themſelves in the Faſhion unleſs they wore a favourite Lock of the Prince's. But, beſides the Abſurdity of the King's Son ſuffering any of his Domeſticks to ſell his Hair, the very Words of the Text are a Confutation of this Notion, where they tell us, that *he weighed the Hair of his Head*; whereas, had it been ſold, the *Buyer* muſt have weigh'd the Money, even *(d)* as *Abraham* did, when he purchas'd the Field of *Ephron.*

OTHERS again pretend, that there is a manifeſt Miſtake crept into the Text, which has been occaſion'd by an ignorant Tranſcriber's inſerting one *numerical* Letter for another, the *Reſch* inſtead of the *Daleth*, i. e. two hundred inſtead of four: But, beſides the Uncertainty, whether the former *Hebrews* made uſe of their *Letters* inſtead of *Figures*, (whereof there is not the leaſt Sign or Token in any ancient Copies) wherein, I pray, would the great Wonder be, if what was cut off from *Abſalom*'s Head, (to thin and ſhorten his Hair, when it grew too weighty and troubleſome to him) amounted to no more than four *Shekels*, which is much about two Ounces? And yet, the whole Deſign of this Narration ſeems to portend ſomething more than uſual, in this prodigious Increaſe of *Abſalom*'s Hair. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

THE Text however does not ſpeak of the *Cuttings* of the Hair, but of the Head of Hair itſelf, when it talks of the Weight of *two hundred Shekels*; and therefore thoſe, who take it in this larger Senſe, are not forgetful to remind us, that, in thoſe Days, Hair was accounted a very great Ornament, and the longer it was, the more it was eſteem'd; that *Abſalom*, to be ſure, would not fail to nouriſh *his* with the utmoſt Care, and to let it grow long enough, becauſe it contributed ſo much to the Gracefulneſs of his Perſon; that, in After-Ages (as perhaps they did then) Men were wont to uſe much Art with their Hair, and dreſs it every Day with fragrant Ointments, in order to make it grow thick and ſtrong; that the noble Guards, which attended *Solomon* (as *Joſephus (e)* informs us) had their long Hair flowing about their Shoulders, which they powder'd with ſmall Particles of Gold, to make it ſparkle, and gliſten againſt the Sun; and that, therefore, it is not improbable, that *Abſalom*, who himſelf was a gay young Man, and wanted none of theſe Helps or Improvements, might, in Proceſs of Time, bring his Hair up to the Weight, that the Scripture records, which, according to the *Golden Shekel* (that was but half as much as the *Silver)* came to no more (as the learned *Bochart* endeavours to prove) than three Pounds and two Ounces.

BUT ſince the Scripture ſays nothing of any ſuch Additions, as Ointments, or Gold-duſt, to inhance the Weight of the Hair; others, who think *this* too much for a Man, that polled his Hair once every Year, if not oftener, have obſerv'd from the Words which we render at *every Year's*

(c) 2 Sam. xiv. 26. *(d)* Gen. xxiii. 16. *(e)* Jewiſh Antiq. lib. viii. c. 12.

A. M. 2919, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1055, &c.

Year's End, that, in the *Original*, they imply no particular Deſignation of Time; and thence infer, that *Abſalom* did not weigh his Hair ſo often as once every Year, but at this particular Time only, when he return'd to *Jeruſalem*. "He, "in his Exile, *ſay they*, which laſted about "three Years, pretending great Sorrow for "his Sin, ſeems to have taken upon him "the Vow of a *Nazarite*, until his Re-"turn; one Part of which was, that he "ſhould not ſuffer his Hair to be cut for "ſuch a determinate Time: But, upon his "Re-call home, being now diſcharg'd from "his Vow, he order'd his Hair to be cut "all clean off, becauſe it was grown very "cumberſome to him; which, being "of ſo long a Growth, amounted to the "Weight, that the ſacred Hiſtory relates "of it." But this Notion of *Abſalom*'s *Nazaritiſm* has no Foundation in Scripture, *(f)* except that lying Pretence to his Father, when, under the Cloak of Religion, he was minded to conceal his intended Rebellion; and therefore all the Superſtructure built upon it muſt neceſſarily fall.

OTHERS, perceiving that none of theſe Inventions would anſwer the Purpoſe, have endeavoured to ſolve the Difficulty by attending to the latter Words in the Text, *two hundred Shekels, after the King's Weight:* And, to this Purpoſe, *(g)* they lay it down as a *Principle*, that, during the Reigns of the Kings of *Judah*, there was no Variation in the *Hebrew Weights*, nor were there any, that were call'd the *King*'s; that the Difference between the *King*'s and the common Weight did not commence, till after ſome Continuance of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; that, towards the End of this Captivity, whoever he was, that revis'd theſe Books of *Samuel*, made mention of ſuch Weights as were not properly *Hebrew*, but ſuch as (after *ſixty* or *ſeventy* Years Captivity) the *Jews* only knew, and theſe were the *Babyloniſh*; and that therefore, when he comes to mention the Weight of *Abſalom*'s Hair, and tells us, that it was *two hundred Shekels*, he adds (by Way of Explanation) that it was *after the King's Weight*, i. e. after the Weight of the King of *Babylon*, whoſe *Shekel* was but the third Part of an *Hebrew Shekel*, *(h)* as the beſt Writers upon *Weights* and *Meaſures* are generally agreed. So that, according to this *Hypotheſis*, *Abſalom*'s Hair, which weighed two hundred *Babyloniſh* Shekels, came but, in our Weight, to about thirty-three Ounces; a Quantity, which thoſe, who deal in that Commodity, have not unfrequently met with upon ſeveral Women's Heads, and therefore what brings this long-conteſted Story, at leaſt, within the Bounds of a far *Probability*.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

THUS have we attempted to ſolve moſt of the remarkable *Difficulties*, that either affect the Character of *David*, or other Parts of Scripture-Account, during this *Period* of its Hiſtory: And may now begin to wave the *Teſtimony* of Heathen Authors, in Confirmation of what we may think ſtrange and unaccountable in the ſacred Records; becauſe Facts of that Kind will not ſo frequently occur; and the *Jewiſh* Nation begins now, in the Reign of King *David*, to make ſo conſiderable a Figure, as to have their Affairs either mention'd, or alluded to, by the moſt remarkable Hiſtorians, both *Greek* and *Latin*.

(f) 2 Sam. xiv. 7, &c. *(g)* Vide *Calmet*'s Commentary in Locum. *(h)* Ibid.

DISSER-

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From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

DISSERTATION IV.

Of the ſacred Chronology and profane Hiſtory, during this Period.

Difficulties in the Chronology clear'd.

BEFORE we enter upon the *foreign* Hiſtory of this Period, it may not be improper to take Notice of ſome *chronological* Difficulties, that are to be found in the Scripture-Account of it. The Space of Time, from the Departure of the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, to the Laying the Foundation of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, is ſo exactly ſtated, that it will admit of no Diſpute: *For (a) it came to paſs*, ſays the Text, *in the four hundred and fourſcore Year, after the Children of* Iſrael *were come up out of the Land of* Egypt, *in the Month* Zif, *which is the ſecond Month, that* Solomon *began to build the Houſe of the Lord:* But then the Manner of computing this Number of Years has been various.

(b) THE Generality of the *Jews*, who make it 450 Years from the Death of *Joſhua*, to the Time of *Samuel*, ſuppoſe the Difference, from the Departure out of *Egypt*, to the firſt Beginning of the Temple, to be 597 Years; but this Account is 127 more than what we find in Scripture. *(c) Joſephus* expreſsly tells us, that *when* Solomon *begun that mighty Work, it was* 592 *Years from the Coming of the* Iſraelites *out of* Egypt; but then it is preſum'd, that he (as well as the other *Jews)* reckons the Years of the *Oppreſſors apart*; whereas they ought to be included in the Years of the *Judges*, who deliver'd the People from that Bondage: For, 'tis but looking into the Scripture-Account, and we ſhall ſee, that, *(d)* before *Othniel*, *Iſrael* was oppreſs'd eight Years; before *Ehud*, eighteen; before *Deborah*, twenty; before *Gideon*, ſeven; before *Jephthah*, eighteen; and before *Sampſon*, forty; now, adding all theſe together, we ſhall find, that they amounted to 111 Years; which, if joined to the Years of the *Judges*, will make the *particular* Years of this Period far exceed the *general:* But, by being included in the Time, aſſigned for the Government of the *Judges*, they make that *particular* and *general* Account of the Years agree very rightly.

THERE is another Difference between this Account in the firſt Book of *Kings*, and what the Apoſtle affirms in the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles*, viz. that *(e) after the Time, that* Joſhua *divided the Land to them by Lot, God gave them Judges for about the Space of four hundred and fifty Years, until* Samuel *the Prophet*. But now, if there be 450 Years from the *Diviſion* of the Land of *Canaan* (which happen'd in the ſeventh Year of *Joſhua*'s Government) to the Time of the Government, or even of the Death of *Samuel*, there muſt be many more than 480 Years, in the whole Interval, from the Departure out of *Egypt*, to the Building of the Temple.

TO ſolve this Difficulty, ſome have imagin'd, that the Words μετὰ ταῦτα, *after that*, which are found in the *twentieth* Verſe, ſhould be plac'd at the Beginning of the *ſeventeenth*, and then the Senſe will be, that, *from God's chuſing our Fathers, to the Time of the Judges, were four hundred and fifty Years*; for, from *Iſaac*'s Birth, *ſay they*, to the Departure of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, are 405 Years; they wander'd in the Wilderneſs forty Years; and the Land was divided by Lot ſeven Years after that; ſo that all theſe, put together, make 452 Years, which the Apoſtle expreſſes by the round Sum of 450. But this apparently is not the Senſe of

(a) 1 Kings vi. 1. (b) *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 1. (c) Jewiſh Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2. (d) *Millar*'s Hiſtory of the Church, c. i. p. 4. (e) Acts xiii. 20.

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of the Apoſtle, who, in his Diſcourſe to the People, goes on *gradually* and *methodically* thus. *God choſe our Fathers*; *he brought them out of* Egypt; *he led them in the Wilderneſs forty Years*; *he divided the Land*; *and* then *he gave them Judges*, &c. *(f)* Others therefore have fallen into a different Way of *Computation*, by making the Years of the *Judges* and *Oppreſſors* diſtinct; for, *the Years of the Judges*, ſay they, *until* Samuel's *Time*, *are* 339; *the Years of the Tyrants are* 111; *which*, *put together*, *make exactly* 450: And this Kind of Reckoning the Apoſtle might mention, (though he did not entirely approve of it) and therefore we find him introducing it with an ὡς, i. e. *after a Manner*, or *as ſome will have it*, who compute the Years of the *Oppreſſors*, as diſtinct from the Years of the *Judges*, though, in Reality, they ought to be included in one another.

THERE is ſtill a farther Difficulty, which ariſes from comparing the Scripture-Chronology, with the Genealogies in the Book of *Ruth*. From the Entrance into the Land of *Canaan*, to the Building of the Temple, were 440 Years: Now, if out of this, we ſubtract for *David*'s Life ſeventy Years, and for that Part of *Solomon*'s Reign, which was before the Foundation of the Temple, four Years, the Remainder will be 366; and, yet for theſe three hundred and ſixty-ſix Years, we have four Generations only, (for *Salmon* begat *Boaz* of *Rahab*; *Boaz* begat *Obed* of *Ruth*; *Obed* begat *Jeſſe*; and *Jeſſe* begat *David*) which, at a Time, *(g)* when the Age of Man was reduced to the Compaſs of ſeventy or eighty Years, is a Thing almoſt impoſſible. But, as it is not certain, that the Lives of all Men were ſhorten'd at the Time, when the *Iſraelites murmur'd in the Wilderneſs*, foraſmuch as the Reaſon for cutting them off ſo ſoon (even to prevent their entering into the Land of *Promiſe*) was *peculiar* to that Generation, and might not affect others; ſo the Lives of others might be extended much longer, until the Days of *David*, and eſpecially in that Family, which God had honour'd ſo highly, as to appoint, that in *it* his bleſſed Son ſhould be born. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

(h) ACCORDING to this Account, we may ſuppoſe that *Salmon* might be about twenty Years old, when he enter'd into *Canaan*, and *Rahab*, whom he married, to be about the ſame Age; and that *Rahab* might bear *Boaz* in the ſixty-ſecond Year of her Age, which, in thoſe Days, was no extraordinary Thing: And then, it is but ſuppoſing farther, that *Boaz* was an hundred and two Years old before he begat *Obed*; *Obed* an hundred and eleven before he begat *Jeſſe*; and *Jeſſe* of the ſame Age before he begat *David*; and the whole Difficulty is remov'd: Only it may be thought a little ſtrange, that Men above an hundred Years old ſhould be capable of begetting Children, until it be conſider'd that *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and *Joſhua* and *Caleb*, were all vigorous Men at this Age; that, long after this, *Jehoiada*, the High-Prieſt, was an hundred and thirty Years old when he died; and that, almoſt in our own Remembrance, our Countryman, *Thomas Parr*, liv'd to an hundred and fifty-two, and had a Son when he was an hundred and five Years old.

The profane *Hiſtory of this Period.*

THIS may ſuffice for ſettling the *Chronology*; and now to proceed to the *Hiſtory* of this Period. Our laſt Connection of the *ſacred* and *profane* Hiſtory we concluded with the Life and Adventures of *Seſoſtris*, who reign'd in *Egypt*, and made a very diſtinguiſh'd Figure in ſeveral Parts of the World, while the *Iſraelites* were ſojourning in the Wilderneſs; but, from the Time that they enter'd in *Canaan*, * they ſeem to have had no Intercourſe with

(f) Vide *Grotius* and *Uſher*. *(g)* Pſal. xc. 10. *(h)* *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 1. and *Millar*'s Church Hiſtory, Chap. i. Period 4.

* We have formerly taken Notice (lib. iii. cap. 5. in the Notes) of the *Series* of *Egyptian* Kings, written by *Eratoſthenes*, and preſerv'd by *Syncellus*; and here to proceed with that Catalogue. In the Year of the World 2523, reign'd in *Egypt Echeſius Caras*, one Year. In the Year 2524, began *Nilocris*, and reign'd ſix Years. In the Year

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the *Egyptians*, nor do their ſeveral Hiſtories at all interſere.

ALL Hiſtory, indeed, in this Period of Time, is ſo defac'd and corrupted with *Fables*, that it is a hard Matter to diſcern any Lineaments of Truth in it; and yet it may not be amiſs to take Notice of ſome of its remarkable Events.

Of Deucalion.

ABOUT the thirty-ninth Year of *Ehud*'s Government in *Iſrael*, (in the Time of *Deucalion*, Son of *Prometheus*) there happen'd ſuch a Deluge in *Theſſaly*, as gave *(i)* the Poets an Occaſion to ſay, that all Mankind was therein deſtroy'd, and that *Deucalion*, and *Pyrrha* his Wife, repeopled the World by throwing Stones behind them, which were inſtantly chang'd into Men and Women.

Phaëton.

MUCH about this Time liv'd *Phaëton*, a Prince of the *Ligurians*, and a great Aſtrologer, that applied himſelf chiefly to the Study of the Courſe of the Sun; and becauſe, in his Days, the Country of *Italy*, near the River *Po*, was ſo incommoded with extraordinary Heats, that the Earth became dry, and barren for ſeveral Years, *(k)* it hence became a renowned Fable among the Poets, that, by his Miſguidance of the Horſes of the Sun, (who is ſaid to have been his Father) he ſet the Earth on Fire.

Ganymede.

ABOUT the fourteenth Year of *Tolah*'s judging *Iſrael*, *Ganymede*, the Son of *Tros*, King of *Phrygia*, being belov'd by *Jupiter* (as the Poets Fable) was by him carried up to Heaven in the Shape of an *Eagle*, and, much againſt *Juno*'s Will, made Cup-bearer to the Gods.

Perſeus.

ABOUT the ſixth Year of *Jair*'s Government, *Perſeus* appear'd in the World, and of him the fabulous Writers have many ſtrange Stories; as, that he was begot by *Jupiter* on *Danaë*, in a golden Shower; that when he came to be of Age, he conquer'd the *Gorgons*, with their Queen *Meduſa*, whoſe Hair was interwoven with Snakes; that he ſubdu'd the Inhabitants of Mount *Atlas*, and firſt deliver'd *Andromeda*, by killing the *Sea-monſter* ſent to devour her, and then married her; that afterwards he fought againſt the Kings of *Mauritania*, and *Æthiopia*, and, returning to *Greece*, overcame his Uncle *Prætus*, and *Polydectes*, King of the Iſland *Seriphus*.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

The Argonauts.

FEW Things are more famous in the Songs of the Poets, than the Expedition of thoſe valiant *Greeks*, that accompanied *Jaſon* to *Colchos*; and the Foundation of the Story is conceiv'd to be this:——That the *Argunauts* ſail'd to ſome Part of *Scythia*, to carry off a Share of the Riches of that Country, where the Inhabitants gain'd a great deal of Gold out of the Rivers, that ran from Mount *Caucaſus*, by uſing Sheep-ſkins with the Wool on, in order to take up that precious Metal, from whence it was call'd the Golden-fleece. But the Poets, out of their fruitful Brains, have made large Additions to the Story; *viz.* that *Jaſon* fell in Love with *Hypſipyle* at *Lemnos*; and that, at *Colchos*, he married *Medea*, the King's Daughter, who, being a famous Witch, taught him how to kill the Dragon, that kept the rich Fleece; how to conquer the Bulls, that vomited Fire, and how to ſow the Serpents Teeth, out of which there aroſe an Army of Men; with many more Fictions of the like Nature.

BUT, of all the Occurrences in this Period, that which has been moſt celebrated

2530, began *Myrtæus*, and reign'd twenty Years. In the Year 2552, began *Thyoſimares* (the ſame that *Herodotus* calls *Myris*, or *Myrios)* and reign'd twelve Years. In the Year 2564, began *Thyrillus*, and reign'd eight Years. In the Year 2572, began *Semiphucares*, and reign'd eighteen Years. In the Year 2590, began *Chuter Taurus*, and reign'd ſeven Years. In the Year 2597, began *Cheres Philoſophus*, and reign'd twelve Years. In the Year 2609, began *Chomo Ephtha*, and reign'd eleven Years. In the Year 2620, began *Anchurius Ochus*, and reign'd ſixty Years. In the Year 2680, began *Penteathyris*, and reign'd ſixteen Years. In the Year 2696, began *Stamenes*, and reign'd twenty-three Years. In the Year 2719, began *Siſtoſichemes*, and reign'd fifty-five Years. In the Year 2774, began *Maris*, and reign'd forty-three Years. In the Year 2817, began *Siphous Hermes*.——In the Year 2836, began *Phruron*, or *Nilus*.——In the Year 2843, began *Amurrhæus*, and reign'd ſixty-three Years, or to the Year of the World 2906. Vide *Millar*'s Church Hiſtory, Chap. i. Period 4.

(i) *Ovid*'s Metamorphoſis, lib. i. fab. 7. *(k)* Ibid. lib. ii. fab. 1.

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And the Siege of Troy.

brated by the Poets, is the Siege of *Troy*; and the probable Occaſion of it is ſuppos'd to be this:

NOT long before this remarkable Event happen'd, the Seas were very much infeſted with Pirates, who, landing on the Shores, ſeiz'd upon all the Women and Cattle they could meet with; and ſo carrying them off, either ſold them in ſome diſtant Country, or kept them for their own Uſe. Hereupon *Tyndareus*, the Father of *Helena*, conſidering the Beauty of his Daughter, caus'd all her Lovers (who were ſome of the principal Men of *Greece*) to bind themſelves by a ſolemn Oath, that if at any Time ſhe ſhould be taken from her Huſband, they would join all their Forces together to recover her: And ſo, being left to chuſe whom ſhe would have for her Huſband, ſhe made Choice of *Menelaus*, King of *Mycenæ*, and Brother to *Agamemnon*. *Paris*, one of the youngeſt Sons of *Priamus*, King of *Troy*, upon the Report of her Beauty, came into *Greece* to ſee her, and was kindly entertain'd by *Menelaus*; but he ſoon took an Opportunity to debauch his Wife, and, having robb'd the Huſband of a great deal of Treaſure, found Means to make his Eſcape both with her and it.

MENELAUS (as ſoon as his Wife was gone) complain'd of the Injury, that had been done him, to all the *Grecian* Princes, and requir'd the Performance of their Oath; which they readily conſented to, and made his Brother *Agamemnon* General of the Forces, that were to be employ'd in this Expedition. The *Greeks* however being unwilling to enter into a War, if Matters could be accommodated by a Treaty, ſent *Ulyſſes*, and ſome others, as Ambaſſadors to *Troy*, to demand *Helena*, and all the Things of Value that were taken with her. What Anſwer the *Trojans* made to this Demand, we are no where inform'd; but ſure it is, that the Ambaſſadors return'd back ſo very much offended with their ill Treatment, that, in a ſhort Time, they fitted out a vaſt *Armament*. From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

BUT there was an unhappy Accident, which mightily retarded the Siege of the City, and that was a Difference, which fell out between *Agamemnon*, and *Achilles*. *Agamemnon*, as *General*, had the Preoption of what Part of the *Booty* he pleas'd, and had then taken to himſelf a captive Woman, the Daughter of *Chryſes*, the Prieſt of *Apollo*, as *Achilles*, and the other Commanding-Officers, had made Choice of others; but, being oblig'd to give up the Prieſt's Daughter, in Atonement for the Peſtilence that was fallen upon the Army, he ſent, and took *Achilles*'s Captive from him, which ſo exaſperated this gallant Warrior, that, to revenge himſelf effectually, he took up a Reſolution, neither to fight himſelf, nor ſuffer any Forces under him to engage; and this gave the Enemy ſo great an Advantage, that *Hector*, at the Head of his Forces, broke through the *Grecian* Trenches one Day, and ſet fire to the Ships.

IN the Midſt of this Extremity, *Patroclus*, the Boſom-Friend of *Achilles*, not being able to ſtand *neuter* any longer, begg'd of *Achilles*, to let him have the Uſe of his Armour, and the Command of his Troops, in order to repulſe the *Trojans*; which he bravely attempted, but in the Engagement, fell by the Hands of *Hector*, who took from him the Arms of *Achilles*, and carry'd them off.

THIS Conjecture *Agamemnon* made uſe of to be reconcil'd to *Achilles*; and, to this Purpoſe, ſent him back his *Captive-Maid*, with many very valuable Preſents, and made an Excuſe for his former Behaviour, as well as he could. *Achilles*, in order to be reveng'd for the Loſs of his Friend, laid aſide all his Reſentment, and join'd the *Greeks* in the next Battle, wherein he vanquiſh'd the *Trojans*; and, ſingling out *Hector*, never left purſuing him, wherever he went, until he had kill'd him. * With *Hector* fell the City, which

* *Homer*, indeed, gives us this Account of the taking of *Troy*, but *Virgil* has inform'd us, that it was done by a large *wooden Horſe*, in which were incloſ'd ſeveral of the chief Commanders of the *Greeks*; that the reſt, ſetting ſail

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which was ſoon reduc'd to Aſhes, and its Inhabitants forc'd to undergo a *military* Execution.

The Grecians Return.

But, how ſevere ſoever the *Greeks* might be to their conquer'd Enemies, ſeveral Hiſtorians have obſerv'd, that, in their Return home, they ſuffer'd almoſt as much Miſery as they had brought upon the *Trojans*. For this is the Account which *Thucydides* gives of them. "By "Reaſon of their long Abſence, they found "many Alterations, when they return'd, "ſo that ſome of them were driven by "their Neighbours from their antient "Seats; many were expell'd their Coun-"tries by Faction; others ſlain, ſoon "after their Arrival; and others depos'd "from their Kingdoms, by ſuch, as "had ſtay'd at home." *Neſtor* and *Pyrrhus* got ſafe home indeed, but were ſlain by *Oreſtes*. *Idomeneus* and *Philoctetes*, upon their Return, were ſoon driven away to ſeek for new Habitations. *Agamemnon* was, upon his firſt Arrival, ſlain by his Wife, and her Adulterer, *Ægiſthus*, who had uſurp'd his Kingdom. *Menelaus*, having long wander'd upon the Sea, was forc'd into *Egypt*, before he could return to *Sparta*. *Ulyſſes*, after ten Years Peregrination, and the Loſs of his whole Company, came home in a poor Condition, and had much Difficulty to recover the Maſterſhip of his own Houſe. *Ajax*, the Son of *Oileus*, was drown'd; *Teucer* fled into *Cyprus*; and *Diomedes* to King *Daunus*. Some of the *Locrians* were driven into *Africa*, others into *Italy*, others into *Sicily*, and ſettled themſelves in ſuch Numbers in theſe Parts, that *Greek* became the current Language of this Iſland, and moſt of the *Eaſt* Part of *Italy* obtain'd the Name of *Magna Græcia*.

From 2 Sam. i. to xix.

Thus the wiſe Ruler of the World was pleas'd to make one wicked Nation the Inſtrument of puniſhing another: But, whatever they ſeverally ſuffer'd, the ſucceeding Generations obtain'd this Advantage by it,——That the Diſperſion of the *Greeks* occaſion'd a fuller Peopling of diſtant Countries, by an Acceſſion of theſe new Inhabitants; and the *Taking of* Troy became, in ſome Years, the ſettled *Epocha*, whereby all, that were acquainted with the *Story* of it, might agree in their Account of Time.

to the Iſland of *Tenedos*, left *Simon* to perſuade the *Trojans*, that this Horſe was built upon a religious Account, and was neceſſary for them to take into the City; that, by his Craft and Inſtigation, they pull'd down Part of the Wall for that Purpoſe; and ſo the *Greeks*, returning on a ſudden, and entering the Breach, open'd the Horſe, and ſeiz'd on the Gates, and burnt the City. But another Author, who perhaps might know the Truth, as well as *Virgil*, gives us a different Account of this Matter; *viz.* that *Æneas*, *Antenor*, and *Polydamus*, having taken ſome Diſguſt at King *Priamus*, agreed with the *Grecians* to betray the City to them, upon Condition, that they might retire with their Men wherever they thought fit, provided they did not ſettle in *Phrygia*. To this Purpoſe it was concerted, that the *Grecians* ſhould ſet ſail the Day before to the Iſland *Tenedos*, as if they were quite gone, but return in the Dark of the Night, when the *Trojans* thought themſelves ſecure, and ſo be let in at the *Scæan* Gate, over which there was a *large Image* of an *Horſe*, which gave the firſt Riſe and Occaſion to all this Story.

CHAP.

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

CHAP. V.

From the Death of Abſalom, *to the Building of the* Temple.

The HISTORY.

David's *Grief for the Loſs of his Son* Abſalom.

AS ſoon as *David* was inform'd of his Son's Death, all the Joy of the Victory was turn'd into Sorrow. The King himſelf withdrew to a † private Apartment, where he vented his Grief in ſuch a † mournful Exclamation, as this: *(a) O my Son* Abſalom, *my Son, my Son* Abſalom, *would God I had died for thee! O* Abſalom, *my Son, my Son!* And as for the Army, inſtead of returning in Triumph, they ſtole ſilently into the City, as if they had done amiſs, and had *loſt*, inſtead of *gaining* the Battle.

THIS *Joab* perceiving, and being ſenſible that ſuch exceſſive Grief, at this Juncture of Affairs, would be of great Prejudice to the King, went boldly in to him, and * expoſtulated the Matter with him in Terms that might perhaps be neceſſary on that Occaſion, but did not ſo well

† The Place, to which *David* withdrew, in order to vent his Grief, was, (as *Joſephus* tells us, lib. vii. c. 10.) *to the Top of one of the higheſt Towers in the City*; but the ſacred Hiſtory calls it *the Chamber over the Gate*, 2 Sam. xviii. 33. for *the Gate* was a ſpacious Place, and much of the ſame Form with the *Forum* among the *Romans*, not only the Market for all Commodities, but the Place, where all great Aſſemblies of the People were likewiſe held. There were ſeveral Buildings, where the chief *Magiſtrates* ſat to adminiſter Juſtice, *Ruth* iv. 1, 2. and where the other Affairs of the State were tranſacted; ſo that it is not improbable, that this *Chamber over the Gate*, where *David* went to weep, might be ſome *Withdrawing-Room* in the Place, where the *Privy-Council* was wont to meet. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† Nothing certainly can be more moving and *pathetick*, than the Words which *David* utters upon this ſad Occaſion; but whether it was *David*'s deliberate Wiſh, that he had died in *Abſalom*'s Stead, or only the Effect of his exceſſive Love and Grief for him, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine. St *Auſtin* ſeems to be on the *affirmative* Side, and gives this Reaſon for it:——That *Abſalom* died impenitent, but might have liv'd to become a better Man; whereas, if *David* had died, he had Reaſon to hope well of his Salvation: But this Suppoſition, (as I take it) is not ſo well founded, ſince there is much more Probability, that, if *Abſalom* had ſurviv'd his Father, he would have grown more profligate than ever; triumph'd in his good Succeſs; inſulted and perſecuted all his Father's Friends; and prov'd a wicked and abominable Tyrant. But whether *David*'s Wiſh was deliberate or no, 'tis certain, that his Grief might be increas'd from this Reflection, that himſelf, by his own Sin in the Caſe of *Uriah*, had been the unhappy Inſtrument and Occaſion of his Son's Death; tho' ſome learned Men have obſerv'd, that the *Oriental* People were accuſtom'd to expreſs their Paſſions with more Vehemence, than we, in theſe Parts of the World, are wont to do, and that the *Repetition* of the ſame Word, *(My Son* Abſalom, *O* Abſalom, *my Son, my Son)* is a Stile proper for mournful Lamentations:

——— Daphninque tuum tollemus ad Aſtra,
Daphnin ad Aſtra feremus, amavit nos quoque Daphnis. VIRG. Ecl. v.

Αἰάζω τὸν Ἄδωνιν, ἀπώλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις
Ὤλετο καλὸς Ἄδωνις. Bion. Id. 1.

Patrick's and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

(a) 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

* *Joſephus* concludes the Speech, which he ſuppoſes *Joab* to have made to *David* upon this Occaſion, in Words to this Effect:—— "Pray, Sir, does not your Conſcience, as well as your Honour reprove you for this intemperate "Tenderneſs, for the Memory of ſo implacable an Enemy? He was your Son, 'tis true, but a moſt ungracious "one; and you cannot be juſt to God's Providence, without acknowledging the Bleſſing of his being taken away. "Let me intreat you therefore to ſhew yourſelf chearfully to your People, and let them know, that it is to their "Loyalty and Bravery that you are indebted for the Honour of the Day; for if you go on, as you have begun, "your Kingdom and your Army will moſt infallibly be put into other Hands, and you will then find ſomething "elſe to cry for." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 10.

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

well become a Subject's Mouth. However, they had this good Effect upon the King, that they rouz'd him from his Melancholy, and made him appear in Publick, to the great Satisfaction of all his *loyal* Subjects; but, as he thought himſelf very inſolently us'd by *Joab* upon ſeveral Occaſions, from that Time he made it his Reſolution to take the firſt Opportunity of † diſmiſſing him from being his *General*.

His Return to Jeruſalem, *and by whom he was met, and conducted home.*

THOSE of his Subjects, who had appear'd in Arms againſt him, being now made ſenſible of the Folly of their *Rebellion*, became the forwardeſt for his Reſtoration; but (what griev'd him much) his own Tribe, the Tribe of *Judah*, ſeem'd a little indifferent as to the Matter, which made him ſend to *Zadok* and *Abiathar*, the chief Prieſts, not only to remind them of their own Duty, but to authorize them likewiſe to treat with *Amaſa* (who, tho' he had commanded *Abſalom*'s Army, was ſtill a Man of great Authority in the Tribe) to offer him his Pardon, and, in Caſe he would come fully into his Intereſt, to promiſe him the *Generalſhip* in the Room of *Joab*.

THUS, all Things conſpiring to his happy Reſtoration, the King left *Mahanaim*, and ſet forward on his Journey to *Jeruſalem*, when the Chiefs of the Tribe of *Judah* came to meet, and conduct him over the *Jordan*. Old *Barzillai*, who had been very kind to the King in his Exile, and ſupply'd him with Proviſions while he continu'd at *Mahanaim*, hearing that he was upon his Return, came to take his Leave of him, and ſee him ſafe over the River; and when the King, in Gratitude for his Kindneſs, gave him an Invitation to go with him to *Jeruſalem*, the good old Man modeſtly excus'd himſelf, upon the Account of his Age, as having now loſt the Reliſh of the Pleaſures of a Court, and deſir'd rather to retire to his own Eſtate, where he might ſpend the Remainder of his Days in Quiet: But, as he had a Son, whoſe Age was more proper to attend him, if his *Majeſty* would be pleas'd to confer any Favour on him, the Obligation would be the ſame; † which *David* promis'd to do, and ſo, with much mutual Bleſſings and Salutations, they parted. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

AMONG the many others who came to meet *David* upon this Occaſion, *Shimei* the *Benjamite*, who, not long before, had loaded him with Curſes and Imprecations, came, † with a thouſand Men of his Tribe, to beg Pardon for his Fault; and, when *Abiſhai* would have perſuaded the King to have him kill'd, he reſented the Motion, as an Indignity put upon himſelf: And, being unwilling to eclipſe the publick Joy with the Blood of any one, gave him his *Royal* Word and Oath, that he ſhould live.

ANOTHER remarkable Perſon, that came to wait upon *David* at this Time, was the perfidious *Ziba*, with his fifteen Sons and twenty Servants. He had again impos'd upon his Maſter, and, when he order'd him to make ready his Aſs, that he, among others, might go and meet the King, ſlid away himſelf to make his *Court* firſt; ſo that *Mephiboſheth*, being lame, was forc'd to ſtay at *Jeruſalem*, (where

† For he had ſufficient Reaſon to think of depreſſing a Man, who was grown ſo inſufferably inſolent and imperious. He had ſlain *Abner* moſt perfidiouſly in cool Blood; had kill'd *Abſalom* againſt the King's expreſs Command; in his late bold Reproof had inſulted over his Sorrow, and (if we may believe *Joſephus*) threaten'd to depoſe him, and give his Kingdom to another. To ſuch a Height of Arrogance will Miniſters ſometimes arrive, when they find that their Service is become neceſſary to their Prince! *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† What *David* did for *Chimham* is uncertain; but, as he had a Patrimony in *Bethlehem*, which was the Place of his Nativity, it is not improbable, that he gave a great Part of it to *Chimham*, and his Heirs for ever; and that this was afterwards call'd the *Habitation of Chimham*, in the Days of *Jeremiah*, Jer. xli. 17. *Bedford*'s Scripture Chronology, lib. v. c. 4.

† The Reaſon why *Shimei* came with ſo large a Retinue, was, to let *David* ſee that he was a Man of ſome conſiderable Rank, and capable of doing him great Service among the People, which might be ſome Inducement to the King to grant him his Pardon; or, very likely, he was one of the *Captains of a Thouſand in his own Tribe*, and might carry them all along with him, to make the ſtronger Interceſſion for his Pardon. *Pool*'s Annotations.

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023. &c.

(where he had all along * mourn'd for the King's Abſence) until the King arriv'd: But, when he was admitted into his Preſence, and the King ſeem'd to be angry with him for not having accompany'd him in his Exile, he charg'd this *ſeeming* Neglect upon the Perfidy of his Servant, and * ſet his Caſe in ſo fair a Light, that the King revok'd the haſty Grant he had made in Favour of *Ziba*, and put his Eſtate upon the ſame Foot of Poſſeſſion that it was before.

Sheba's *Rebellion, and upon what Occaſion.*

WHEN *David* was paſs'd the *Jordan*, he was willing to make all poſſible Haſte to *Jeruſalem*; and, as the Tribe of *Judah* was firſt that came to conduct him home, he (very probably to gratify them) march'd on without waiting for the great Men of *Iſrael*, who, in all Parts of the Kingdom, were making ready to join him. This occaſion'd ſome hot Diſputes between the Princes of *Iſrael* and thoſe of *Judah*: And, as the King was loth to diſpleaſe either Party, and therefore did not care to intermeddle in the Controverſy, ſeveral of the Tribes of *Iſrael* took an outward *Umbrage* at this, which occaſion'd a freſh *Inſurrection*. *Sheba*, a *Benjamite*, and not unlikely one of *Saul*'s Family, made publick *Proclamation*, by the Sound of *Trumpet*, that "ſince the Tribe of *Judah* "had engroſs'd *David* to themſelves, "they might e'en take him; and, ſince "all the other Tribes had viſibly de- "ſerted, their wiſeſt Way would be to "ſtand to their Arms, and, in like Man- "ner, deſert him." Whereupon a great many of the other Tribes follow'd *Sheba*, but the Men of *Judah* perſiſted in their Loyalty, and conducted the King to *Jeruſalem*. As ſoon as he arriv'd in the City, the firſt Thing he did, was to declare *Amaſa* his *General*, and to order him to get together a ſufficient Body of Forces, as faſt as he could, to purſue after *Sheba*. † *Amaſa*, however, found more Difficulty in executing this Order, than was expected; which when *David* underſtood, he ſent *Abiſhai* with his Guards (for he was reſolv'd not to employ his Brother *Joab* any more) in Queſt of *Sheba*, until *Amaſa*, with the reſt of the Army, could join him. Exaſperated at this, *Joab*, without any Order, went along with his Brother; and when *Amaſa* came up with them, (which was at *Gibeon*) and was going to take upon him the Command of the whole Army, he advanc'd, with all ſeeming *Friendlineſs*,

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

* The Words in the Text are, that *he had neither dreſſed his Feet, nor trimmed his Beard, nor waſhed his Clothes, from the Day that the King departed*, 2 Sam. xix. 24. Theſe were ſome of the Inſtances, wherein the *Jews* were wont to expreſs their Mourning; and they are here mention'd by the Hiſtorian, as Evidences of the Falſhood of *Ziba*'s Information againſt his Maſter, ſince no one, who neglected himſelf to this Degree, could be ſuppos'd ambitious of a Crown. *Not dreſſing his Feet*, may ſignify either not cutting his *Toe-Nails*, or his *not waſhing his Feet*, which the *Jews* were accuſtom'd very frequently to do, becauſe of the bad Smell which was natural to them, as well as the *Arabians*, and ſome other Nations; and therefore his Omiſſion of this could not but make him offenſive to himſelf. *Not trimming his Beard* was letting its Hair grow *negligently*, and without any Order. For the Manner of the *Jews* was to cut the Hair from the Lip upwards, and what grew likewiſe on the *Cheek*, but what was on the *Chin*, and ſo backwards to the *Ear*, that they ſuffer'd to grow; and *not waſhing his Clothes* muſt denote his putting on no *clean Linnen*, but wearing the ſame *Shirt* all the while. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

* *Joſephus* brings in *Mephibоſheth* pleading his Excuſe to *David* for not attending him, and expreſſing a grateful Senſe of his Favours, in ſuch like Words as theſe:——"Nor has he only diſappointed me in the Exerciſe of "my Duty, but has been doing me ſpiteful Offices to your *Majeſty* likewiſe: But you, Sir, are ſo juſt, and ſo great a "Lover of God and Truth, that I am ſure your Generoſity and Wiſdom will never entertain a Calumny to my "Prejudice. Our Family has had the Experience of your Piety, Modeſty, and Goodneſs to a Degree never to be "forgotten, in paſſing over, and pardoning the innumerable Hazards and Perſecutions, that you were expos'd to, in "the Days, and by the Contrivance of my Grandfather, when all our Lives were forfeited, in your Power, and at "your Mercy. But then, after all this gracious Tenderneſs, your ſuperadding the Honour of taking *me* to your "*Table*, (a Perſon ſo obnoxious in Regard of my *Relations*) as a Friend, and as a *Gueſt*, nothing could be either "greater, or more obliging than this." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. vii. c. 7.

† The People, having been harraſs'd in the late *Civil* War, were not perhaps ſo forward to engage in another. Some of them might not like to ſerve under a Man, who had lately headed a rebellious Army againſt the King, and others might have conceiv'd ſo high an Opinion of *Joab*, as not eaſily to be brought to ſerve under any other *General*. Any of theſe Things might very well retard *Amaſa*'s Recruits, and yet he might be loth to make ſuch a Report to the King, for fear that it might diminiſh his Authority, and make him appear not ſo well qualify'd for the Office, wherein he had plac'd him. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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Joab *ſtabs* Amaſa *baſely, and makes himſelf* General, *and ſuppreſſes* Sheba's *Rebellion.*

Friendlineſs, to ſalute him, but, when he came within Reach, he * took him by the Beard, and ſtabb'd him to the Heart; and ſo, leaving him to wallow in his Blood, proclaim'd himſelf *General in Chief*, and, taking the Army with him, purſu'd after *Sheba*, † leaving Orders for the Forces, that were coming up, to follow after.

SHEBA had gone about all the Tribes of *Iſrael* to ſee if he could prevail with them to take up Arms againſt *David*; but finding very few, that, upon ſecond Thoughts, were willing to engage in his Meaſures, he was forc'd at laſt, with the few Forces he had got together, to ſhut himſelf up in *Abel*, a fortify'd Town in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, in the *Northern* Part of *Judea*: But *Joab* was ſoon at his Heels, and having beſieg'd the Town, and batter'd the Walls, was making Preparation for an *Aſſault*, when † a Woman of great Prudence call'd to the *Beſiegers* from off the Walls, and deſir'd to ſpeak with their *General*. When *Joab* was come within hearing, the Woman addreſſed Herſelf to him in a very handſome Manner, and told him, "That, † by a long Preſcrip- "tion of Time, it had always been a "Cuſtom, founded *(b)* on the Law of "God, whenever the *Hebrews* came before "any City, to offer Peace in the firſt "Place, even though the Inhabitants were "of another Nation; much more then "ought this to have been done to a Peo- "ple, that were all of the ſame Blood, "and the greateſt Part of them loyal Sub- "jects to the King." To which *Joab* replied, "That he had no ill Deſign againſt "the People of the City, only as they "harbour'd a *Rebel* and a *Traitor*, whom "he

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

* It was an antient Cuſtom among the *Grecians*, to take the Perſon to whom they had any Addreſs to make, by the Chin, or Beard, *antiquis Græciæ in ſupplicando mentum attingere mos erat*, ſays *Pliny*, lib. xi. c. 45. and even to this Day, the *Turks*, in their Salutations, do very frequently take one another by the Beard, (Vide *Thevenot*'s Travels, c. 22.) The *Arabians* have a great Regard to the Beard: The Wives kiſs their Huſbands, and the Children their Fathers Beards, when they come to ſalute them; and, when two Friends meet together, their Cuſtom is, in the Courſe of their Compliments, to interchange Kiſſes in this Manner, (Vide *Darvieux* Couſtumes des Arabes, c. 7.) as the like Cuſtom is ſtill preſerv'd among the *Eaſtern* People, the *Indians*, who take one another by the *Chin*, when they would give an hearty *Salute*, and ſay *Bobba*, i. e. *Father*, or *Bii*, *Brother*, as the Author of the Voyage to the *Eaſt-Indies* relates. Vide *Peter de Valles*'s Travels.

† So inſolent was *Joab* become, upon the Preſumption that *David* durſt not puniſh him, that as he ventur'd upon this bloody Fact, ſo he imagin'd, that though the Sight of *Amaſa*'s dead Body might ſtop the March of thoſe that came by it, yet, upon its being given out that he was again become their *General*, their Love for him was ſuch, that they would not ſcruple to follow him. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† It ſeems not unlikely, that this Woman was a *Governeſs* in this City; for, tho' that Office was moſt commonly occupied by Men, yet there want not Inſtances of Women, (as in the Caſe of *Deborah*, Judg. iv. 4. and Queen *Athaliah*, 2 Kings xi.) who have been employ'd in the Adminiſtration of civil Affairs. If ſhe was inveſted with any ſuch Authority, ſhe was the propereſt Perſon to deſire a *Parley* with the *General*; and Reaſon good ſhe had to deſire it, becauſe ſhe knew the preſent Temper and Fears of the *Citizens* and *Soldiers* both, *viz.* that conſidering the imminent Danger they were in, they were generally deſirous of Peace, and reſtrain'd from it only by *Sheba*'s Power and Authority. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† In the Beginning of this Woman's Speech to *Joab*, there is ſomething that ſeems both abrupt and obſcure. *They were wont to ſpeak in old Time, ſaying, they ſhould ſurely aſk Counſel at* Abel, *and ſo they ended the Matter*, 2 Sam. xx. 18. according to this Tranſlation, the Senſe of the Words is, ——— "This City, which thou art about to "deſtroy, is no mean and contemptible one, but ſo honourable and conſiderable for its Wiſdom, and the wiſe People "in it, that when any Difference did ariſe among any of the neighbouring Places, they us'd *proverbially* to ſay, *We "will aſk the Opinion and Advice of the Men of* Abel *about it, and we will ſtand to their Arbitration, and ſo all Parties "were ſatisfied, and Diſputes ended*:" So that her Words, according to this Senſe, are an high Commendation of the City of *Abel*, for its being a Place (Time out of Mind) very eminent for the Wiſdom and Prudence of its Inhabitants. But there is another Tranſlation in the *Margin* of our Bibles, which ſeems to be more natural, and makes the Woman ſpeak in this Manner:———"When the People ſaw thee lay Siege to the City, they ſaid, *Surely he will "aſk, if we will have Peace; for the Law preſcribes, that he ſhould offer Peace to* Strangers, *much more then to* Iſraelitiſh "*Cities*; and if he wou'd once do this, we ſhould ſoon bring Things to an amicable Agreement; for we are peace- "able People, and faithful to our Prince." So that, according to this Interpretation, the Woman both modeſtly reprov'd *Joab* for the Neglect of his Duty, and artfully engag'd him in the Performance of it. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

(b) Deut. xx. 10.

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

" he demanded of them: " Whereupon the Woman perſuaded the Inhabitants to cut off *Sheba*'s Head, and throw it over the Wall, which when they had done, *Joab* raiſed the Siege, and withdrew with his Army to *Jeruſalem*; where his Services upon this Occaſion were thought to be *ſuch*, that the King found himſelf obliged to reſtore him to his Poſt of *Captain-General.*

A Famine for Saul's Slaughter of the Gibeonites remov'd.

NOT long after this, there happened a ſore Famine in the Land, and the long Continuance of it (which was for three Years) made *David* ſuſpect that it did not proceed from any common Cauſe, but was inflicted by the immediate Hand of God; and when he conſulted the Divine *Oracle* to know the Occaſion of it, he was given to underſtand, that *Saul*'s Cruelty to the *Gibeonites*, in ſlaying ſo many, contrary to the Treaty then depending between him and them, was the Cauſe of it. Hereupon *David* ſent to the *Gibeonites*, to know † what Satisfaction they deſired; and when he was told, that they expected ſeven of *Saul*'s Poſterity to be delivered to them, he complied with their Demand, and ſent two Sons of *Rizpah*, *Saul*'s Concubine, and † five of *Merab*, his eldeſt Daughter, but ſpared *Mephiboſheth*, the Son of *Jonathan*, for the Love, which he had for his Father when alive. Theſe ſeven the *Gibeonites* took, and hung upon *Gibbets*; and there they intended them to hang, † until God ſhould ſend *Rain* upon the Earth, for the Want of this occaſioned the *Famine:* But *Rizpah*, being informed of this, had a Tent made of Sackcloth (pitched near the Place) for her to live in, that ſo, by the Help of her Servants, ſhe might * keep Watch Day and Night, to fright away the Birds and Beaſts from doing any Hurt to the *dead* Bodies. It was not long however, before God ſent plentiful Showers of Rain, ſo that *Rizpah* had the Liberty to take down the Bodies: And, when *David* was informed of this her pious Care, he was moved thereby to take up the Bones of *Saul*, and *Jonathan* his Son, (who, for five and thirty Years before, had been buried under a Tree at *Jabeſh-Gilead)* and, together with theſe ſeven *Sufferers* of the ſame Family, gave them an honourable Interment in the Tomb of *Kiſh*, the Father of *Saul*, at *Zelah*, in the Country of *Benjamin.*

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

DAVID, in the Beginning of his Reign, had ſo humbled the *Philiſtines*, that they were not able to bring any great Numbers into the Field, but ſtill, as long as they had Men among them of a *gigantick* Stature, and ſuch as were fit to be their *Champions*, they did not ceaſe to diſturb the Peace of *Iſrael*, inſomuch, that *David*, in the latter End of his Reign, had four Engagements with them: In the firſt of which, himſelf had like to have been ſlain by one of theſe monſtrous large Men,

† This may ſeem ſtrange, unleſs we ſuppoſe, (as *Joſephus* does) that, when *David* conſulted God, he told him, not only for what Crime it was that he ſent this Puniſhment, but that he ſhould take ſuch a Revenge for it, as the *Gibeonites* ſhould deſire: And there was this farther Reaſon for humouring the *Gibeonites* herein, becauſe they had been modeſt under their Sufferings, and never made any Complaint to *David* of the Injuries, that had been done them. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† *Michal* is put in the Text indeed, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 8. but not by *Miſtake*, as ſome will have it; for though *Michal* was not the Wife of *Adriel*, but *Merab*; yet thoſe Children which *Merab* had by *Adriel*, *Michal* brought up; and the *Jews* obſerve, upon this Occaſion, that whoever brings up a *Pupil* in his Houſe, is in Scripture ſaid to have *begotten* him. Nor is it in Scripture only, that this Form of Expreſſion takes place, but in *Heathen* Authors likewiſe. For *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus* are called *Sons of Atreus*, becauſe *Pliſthenes* (who was their Father) being *dead*, he took care to bring them up. *Howell*'s Hiſtory, in the Notes, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† It was a poſitive Law to the *Iſraelites*, Deut. xxi. 22, 23. that, if any Man was hanged, he ſhould be bury'd before Night; but the *Gibeonites*, being not of that Nation, thought themſelves not oblig'd by that Law. They are remark'd indeed, to have been a *Remnant of the Amorites*, (2 Sam. xxi. 2.) and among them (as ſome have imagin'd) it was a barbarous Cuſtom in thoſe Days, (as it certainly prevailed in after-Ages) to hang up Men, in order to appeaſe the Anger of Gods in Time of *Famine*. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

* It is an obvious Remark from hence, that *Croſſes* and *Gibbets*, whereon *Malefactors* were executed, did not ſtand high from the Ground, ſince the dead Bodies of ſuch were in Danger of being torn by *carnivorous* Creatures; and, what we may farther obſerve, is, that it was an antient Cuſtom for the *Relations* of ſuch, as were thus executed, to watch their dead Bodies. Thus *Homer* (Iliad xxiii.) mentions *Venus*, as taking care of *Hector*'s Body, and the Story of the *Epheſian* Matron every one can tell. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

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Men, had not *Abiſhai* came timely in to his Aid, and killed the *Philiſtine*; upon which Occaſion, it was unanimouſly agreed in the Army, that the King ſhould never more go into the Battle, leſt a † Life ſo precious ſhould be loſt.

In the other three Engagements, nothing remarkable happened, but the Death of four of theſe *huge* Men, by the Hands of ſome of *David*'s chief Officers; except we may mention here another valiant Act, † which might probably be done at this Time.

The *Philiſtines* Army lay in the Valley of *Rephaim*, between *David*'s Camp and *Bethlehem*, where they had likewiſe a Garriſon: But notwithſtanding this, upon *David*'s intimating a Deſire to have ſome of the Water of *Bethlehem*, three of his chief Captains broke through the Enemies Camp, and having drawn ſome Water out of the Well, brought it to *David*; but he, underſtanding at what Price it had been purchaſed, even at the Hazard of all their Lives, would not drink it, but offered it to the Lord.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

A Peſtilence, for David's *Numbering the People, remov'd.*

About two Years before *David*'s Death, (whatever might be the Occaſion of it) ſo it was, that ‖ he was deſirous to know the Number of his People, and accordingly, gave his chief Officers Orders to go through the whole Kingdom, and bring him an Account of all the People. *Joab* endeavoured to remonſtrate againſt it, in a Manner more modeſt, than was cuſtomary with him; but the King's Orders were *poſitive*, and therefore *Joab*, with other Officers to aſſiſt him, beginning on the *Eaſt* Side of *Jordan*, came round by the *North* Parts of *Canaan*, and returned to *Jeruſalem*, at the End of nine Months and twenty Days, with an *Eſtimate*, that in *Iſrael* there were eight hundred Thouſand Men fit to bear Arms, and ‖ five hundred Thouſand in *Judah*; but of the Men, that belonged to the Tribes of *Levi* and *Benjamin*, there was no Liſt given in.

DAVID

† The Expreſſion is very beautiful, and ſignificant, in the Text: *Thou ſhalt no more go out with us to Battle, that thou quench not the Light of* Iſrael, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 17. For good Kings are in Scripture juſtly called the *Light* of the People, (1 *Kings* xi. 36. and *Pſal.* cxxxii. 17.) becauſe the Beauty and Glory, the Conduct and Direction, the Comfort, and Safety, and Welfare of a People, depend upon them, and are deriv'd from them. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† It is commonly obſerv'd by the *Jewiſh* Commentators, that, though *David* expreſs'd a Deſire for ſome of the Water of *Bethlehem*, becauſe it was the Place of his Nativity, and the Water not improbably very excellent in its Kind, yet he did not do this with any Intent, that any ſhould venture their Lives to fetch him it. In this Action however, they have remark'd three wonderful Things, *viz.* That three Men could break through the whole Hoſt of the *Philiſtines*; and when they had ſo done, durſt ſtay to draw Water out of the Well; and then carry it away, with an high Hand, through the ſame Hoſt to *David*: But they might have added a fourth Remark, *viz.* That they attempted this at the Gate of *Bethlehem*, where a Garriſon of the *Philiſtines* kept a ſtrong Guard. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

‖ The Words in the Text are——*And again the Anger of the Lord was kindled againſt* Iſrael, *and he mov'd* David *againſt them to ſay, Go number* Iſrael *and* Judah, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1. But in the *Original* there is no *Nominative* Caſe at all. We find it however ſupply'd in 1 *Chron.* xxi. 1. where it is ſaid, that *Satan ſtood up againſt* Iſrael, *and provoked* David *to number* Iſrael: But then, by the Word *Satan*, there is no Neceſſity why we ſhould underſtand the *Devil* properly ſo called, becauſe any Evil Miniſter, or Counſellor, that adviſ'd *David* to number the People, will anſwer the Signification of the Word as well: And that there was ſome ſuch Counſellor, who prompted *David* to this Action, ſeems to be imply'd in theſe Words of *Joab*:——*Now the Lord thy God add unto the People (how many ſoever they be) an hundred Fold, and that the Eyes of my Lord the King may ſee it, but why doth my Lord the King delight in this Thing?* 2 Sam. xxiv. 3. Whereby it ſeems plain, that the Matter had been debated in the King's *Council* before, and that, though *Joab* was one who oppos'd it, *David* was more influenc'd by the Perſuaſion of ſome other. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

‖ If we compare this Account with what we meet with in 1 *Chron* xxi. 5. we ſhall find a great Difference; for *there* the Men of *Iſrael* are ſaid to be *three hundred thouſand more*, than they are *here*, and, on the other Hand, the Men of *Judah* are ſaid to be *thirty thouſand leſs*: But, as for the former Difference, 'tis but ſuppoſing, that, in this Account recorded in *Samuel*, the ſtanding *Legions* (which amounted in all to two hundred and eighty-eight thouſand, *i. e.* twenty-four thouſand with their *Officers*, upon Guard every Month) are not here mention'd, tho' they be in *Chronicles*; and as to the latter Difference, 'tis but adding twenty-four thouſand *legionary* Soldiers to the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Difficulty is remov'd: Tho' ſome are apt to think, that, in this Cauſe, there is no need of this Suppoſition, becauſe it is a common Thing in Scripture to mention a *round* Sum, either of Men, or Years, tho', upon a ſtrict Computation, there may be ſome wanting. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

2

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DAVID had no ſooner received the Account, but his Heart miſgave him, that he had done wrong; and it was not long, before the Prophet *Gad* was ſent to bring his Sin to Remembrance, and to offer him the Choice of three Puniſhments, ‖ Famine, Peſtilence, or War, which he liked beſt.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

WHERE every Puniſhment was ſo deſtructive, it was hard to tell which to prefer; but *David* at laſt made Choice of the *Peſtilence*, which accordingly was ſent, and, in ‖ a very ſhort Time, deſtroyed no leſs than ſeventy Thouſand Men. The Plague began in the extream Parts of the Kingdom, but every Moment made Advances nearer and nearer to *Jeruſalem*; which when the King and Inhabitants of the City heard, they cloath'd themſelves in Sackcloth, and, with all Humility, cry'd unto God for Mercy. A little before the Offering up of the *Evening-Sacrifice*, (or before the Time of *Evening-Prayer*) there appeared an Angel over *Jeruſalem* brandiſhing a flaming Sword in his Hand, as if he were going to deſtroy it; whereupon *David* implored God's Mercy for the People, what Vengeance ſoever might light upon him, who was chiefly guilty: But, as he was expecting ſome heavy Stroke, the Angel ſent *Gad* to him with Orders to go immediately, and build an Altar in the *Threſhing-Floor of Araunah the Jebuſite*, which accordingly he did, and, having purchaſed the Place, and ſome Oxen for Sacrifice, *(c) for* ‖ *fifty Shekels of Silver*, he offered *Burnt-offerings* and *Peace-offerings*, whereof the Lord declared his Acceptance by *Fire* from Heaven *and ſo the Plague* ceaſed.

His employing his Time towards the latter End of his Life.

IT is not improbable, that God at this Time revealed to *David* the exact Frame and Faſhion of the Temple; that from the Acceptableneſs of his Sacrifices, he perceiv'd that this *Threſhing-Floor* was the Place, which God had deſigned for the Situation of his Temple; that therefore he not only purchaſed that, but the whole Top of the Mount of *Moriah* likewiſe, at the Price of *(d) ſix hundred Shekels of Gold*, for the *Ground-plot* of this Temple; and that all the Remainder of his Time was employ'd, in providing whatever was neceſſary for the Purpoſe of building it; in ſettling the Number

‖ There is another Difference in this Account, and what we meet with in the Book of *Chronicles*. *There* the Famine is ſaid to be for *three Years* only, but *here* it is ſaid to be for *ſeven*. The *Septuagint* indeed makes it no more than *three*; and for this Reaſon ſome have imagin'd, that the *ſeven* is an Error crept into the *Text*, eſpecially conſidering that *three Years of* Famine agree better with three *Days Peſtilence*, and *three Months Flight before an Enemy*. But there is no Reaſon to ſuppoſe any Error in the Text; 'tis but ſaying, that, in *Chronicles*, the Author ſpeaks of thoſe Years of Famine, which were to come for *David*'s Sin only, but in *Samuel*, of thoſe three Years of Famine likewiſe, which were ſent for *Saul*'s Sin, 2 *Sam.* xxi. Now within one Year, after the Famine, that was ſent for *Saul*'s Sin, was *David*'s Sin in numbering the People; the intermediate Year then was either the *ſabbatical* Year, wherein the People were not allow'd to ſow nor reap, or a Year of ſuch exceſſive *Drought*, that the Crop came to little or nothing. Upon either of theſe Accounts we may properly enough ſay, that there were four Years of Famine before, and *three* more being now added to them make up the *ſeven*, that are here mention'd. *Pool*'s Annotations.

‖ The Words in the Text are:——*So the Lord ſent a Peſtilence upon* Iſrael; *from the Morning, even to the Time appointed.* The Time appointed was the Space *of three Days*; and therefore ſome are of Opinion, that the Plague laſted ſo long; but then others urge, that this does not agree with what follows, *viz.* that *God repented him of the Evil*, and commanded the Angel, who ſmote the People, to ſtay his Hand. They therefore conclude, that as the Word *Moed* properly ſignifies an *Aſſembly*, the *Time Moed* muſt be, when the People met together at the Time of Evening Sacrifice, *i. e.* about the *ninth* Hour of the Day, and conſequently, that the Plague continu'd from the Morning to this Time, which is about nine Hours, or the eight Part of three Days; God in his Mercy having been pleas'd to mitigate the Rigour of his Judgment upon the ſincere Repentance of his People. *Patrick*'s Commentary and *Pool*'s Annotations.

(c) 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

‖ There is again another Difference in the Account which we have in the *Chronicles*, and this in *Samuel*. In the *Chronicles* it is ſaid, that *David* bought the Threſhing Floor, *&c.* for *ſix hundred Shekels of Gold*, but in *Samuel* it is ſaid, for *fifty Shekels of Silver*. Now a Shekel of Gold being of twelve Times more Value, than a Shekel of Silver, it makes the Diſparity very large; and therefore (to account for this) it is generally ſuppos'd, that in the whole *David* made two Purchaſes; firſt he bought the *Threſhing Floor* and *Oxen*, for which he gave *fifty Shekels of Silver*; but that afterwards all the Ground about it (out of which the Courts of the Temple were made) coſt him *ſix hundred Shekels of Gold*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

(d) 1 Chron. xxi. 25.

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Number of the Officers, and the Manner of the daily Service of thoſe, that were to attend it; next to this, in ſettling his *civil* Affairs, and appointing *(e) Judges*, Magiſtrates, and all inferior Officers, whoſe Buſineſs it was to puniſh *Offenders*, and to keep all others to their Duty; then, in ſettling his *(f) military* Matters, particularly the twelve *Captains*, for every Month, with their *Legions*, to attend on the King in their Turns; then *(g)* the *Princes* of the twelve *Tribes*, and afterwards *(h)* ſeveral other Officers.

But while he was contriving theſe Things in the beſt Manner; he ſeems to have been taken, either with a *dead Palſy*, or ſome other Diſtemper, which chilled his Blood, ſo that he could not be warm in his Bed. His *Phyſicians* therefore adviſ'd, that, to ſupply him with † a *natural* Heat, a Virgin ſhould lie in the ſame Bed with him; for which Purpoſe *Abiſhag* of *Shunem*, in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, was brought to him, and made *Concubinary* Wife, tho' he had never any carnal Knowledge of her.

His proclaiming Solomon *his Succeſſor.*

ADONIJAH, who (next after *Abſalom)* was *David*'s eldeſt Son, taking the Advantage of his Father's Age and Infirmity, began to entertain Thoughts of making himſelf King, preſuming, that his Father either could not, or would not obſtruct him. He was indeed a Prince of exquiſite Beauty, admir'd by all, and ſo indulg'd by his Father, that he † never contradicted him in any Thing; but, as he had a great deal of *Abſalom* in his *Complexion*, he failed not to imitate him in his *Equipage*, Attendants, and ſplendid Manner of Life. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

By ſome Means however, he had gain'd *Joab* the General of the Forces, and *Abiathar* the *High-Prieſt* over to his Party; and by their Advice it was, that he invited all the Kings Sons, (except *Solomon)* and all the great Men of *Judah*, except *Nathan* the Prophet, *Benaiah* Captain of the Guards, and the Officers of the Army (who, with *Zadok* the other High-Prieſt, were not for him) to a ſumptuous Entertainment at *Enrogel*, where the Purpoſe of the Meeting was (as ſoon as the Company had well feaſted) to proclaim him King in the Room of his Father. *Nathan*, who knew † God's Deſignation, *David*'s Choice, and the People's Intereſt in the Matter, having got Intelligence of this, went and acquainted *Bathſheba* with it, and adviſ'd her by all Means to go and preſs the King † to declare *Solomon* his Succeſſor,

(e) 1 Chron. xxvi. 29, to the End. *(f)* Ibid. xxvii. 1, to 15. *(g)* Ibid. *(h)* Ibid. xxix. 1, to 20.

† It is the Obſervation of *Galen*, in his fifth Book of *the Power of ſimple Medicines*, that nothing ſo effectually procures Heat and Health, as the Application of any Thing *young* to the Stomach: The Advice of *David*'s Phyſicians therefore was not amiſs; but it had been ſinful Advice, and ſuch as he could not have follow'd, had not this young Woman, whom he took to Bed to him, been his *Concubinary* Wife. In thoſe Days ſuch Wives were allowable: And that ſhe ſerv'd him in this Capacity is very manifeſt from the Account we have of her in Scripture; for, whereas it is ſaid, that *the King knew her not*, this certainly implies, that he might have had carnal Knowledge of her without Sin, or Scandal; whereas it is ſaid, that *ſhe lay in his Boſom*, this Phraſe every where in Scripture denotes what was the ſole Privilege of a Wife, or Concubine, *Gen.* xvii. 5. *Deut.* xiii. 6. Nor can we imagine, why *Adonijah*'s deſiring her in Marriage had been ſo heinous a Crime in *Solomon*'s Account, had ſhe not been the King's Wife, and he, by this Means, had deſign'd to revive his Pretenſions to the Crown. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† It is remark'd of *David*, that one of his great Faults, and what had led him into many Premunires, was his extraordinary Indulgence to his Children, of whom he was ſo fond, that he ſeems to have overlook'd their Errors, and not reprov'd them, though he was bound to do it by a plain Law, *Lev.* xix. 17. and could not but know, that the High-Prieſt *Eli* was ſeverely puniſh'd for this Neglect. *Pool*'s Annotations.

† In 2 *Sam.* vii. 12. God had promis'd *David* by *Nathan*, that he would ſet upon his Throne a Son, that ſhould proceed from him, which plainly ſignify'd, that none of his Sons already born were to be the Perſon; and in 1 *Chron.* xxii. 8, *&c.* he declar'd by the ſame Prophet, that, after his Father, *Solomon* ſhould reign, and build him an Houſe. This *Adonijah* could not but know; and therefore his ſetting himſelf againſt the Decree of Heaven made his Sin the greater. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† This Power of naming a Succeſſor was firſt aſſum'd by *David*, and, for ſome Time afterwards (as appears by the Story of his Grandſon *Reboboam)* was continu'd in the *Jewiſh* State. It was a Privilege that, in After-Ages, was granted to ſeveral good Princes, but among the *Iſraelites* it did not prevail long, becauſe the Conſtitution of other Nations (to which the *Iſraelites* affected to conform themſelves) was different. *Pool*'s Annotations and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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Succeſſor, ſince Things were now come to that Extremity, that, without her doing this, all their Lives muſt certainly be in Danger. *Bathſheba* purſued her Inſtructions; went to the King, and, having acquainted him with *Adonijah*'s Conſpiracy, deſired him to name her Son his Succeſſor, according to the *Oath*, that he had formerly made to her. While ſhe was thus talking with the King, *Nathan* came in, and confirm'd what ſhe had ſaid; ſo that *David* immediately declar'd *Solomon* his Succeſſor, and thereupon commanded *Zadok* the Prieſt, *Nathan* the Prophet, and *Benaiah* the Captain of his Guards, with the other Officers and Miniſters of State, to mount him † on the Mule, that he himſelf us'd to ride; and, having in this Manner † conducted him to *Gihon*, there to let *Zadok* and *Nathan* anoint him, and then, by Sound of Trumpet, to proclaim him King of *Iſrael*. All this was accordingly done, and the People of *Jeruſalem*, by their loud Shouts and Acclamations of Joy, gave Teſtimony of their Approbation of *David*'s Choice.

From 2 Sam. xix to 1 Kings viii.

BUT how *thunder-ſtruck* was *Adonijah*, and his Company, when, being juſt upon the Point of proclaiming him King, they heard the Sound of the Trumpet, and the Shouts of the People attending *Solomon!* As ſoon as they were inform'd of the Occaſion, each Man thought proper to ſhift for himſelf; but, as for *Adonijah*, he * fled to the Altar for Sanctuary, till, having obtain'd of *Solomon* a Promiſe of Life, upon Condition that he would never attempt any Thing for the future againſt his Government, he was conducted into the King's Preſence, where he made his Obeiſance to *Solomon*, in Token of Thankfulneſs for his Preſervation, and in Acknowledgment of his *Superiority*.

His Speech to the Princes, and People of Iſrael, *concerning the Building of the Temple.*

THIS *Inauguration* of *Solomon* however was a little too haſty and private; and therefore *David*, intending a more publick *Coronation*, order'd all the Princes of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, and all the Officers of his Court and Army, to attend him; When

† All the reſt of *David*'s Sons were wont to ride upon Mules, when they went abroad, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 29. but *David* had a Mule peculiar to himſelf, and the mounting *Solomon* upon it was a ſufficient Declaration in his Favour. For, as it was capital (according to *Maimonides*) to ride upon the King's Mule, or ſit on his Throne, or handle his Sceptre without his Order; ſo, on the contrary, to have the Honour to ride upon the King's Horſe, by his Appointment, was accounted the higheſt Dignity among the *Perſians*, as appears by the Story of *Mordecai* in the Book of *Eſther*. *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† Some *Commentators* are of Opinion, that *Gihon* was the ſame with the Fountain of *Siloam*; but this is a groſs Miſtake, ſince *Gihon* was manifeſtly to the *Weſt*, and *Siloam* to the *Eaſt* of *Jeruſalem*. There is little or no Certainty likewiſe in the Notions of ſome *Rabbins*, who pretend that, in antient Times, Kings were always anointed by the Side of a Fountain, by way of good *Omen*, or that the perpetual Running of the Stream might be an *Emblem* of the Perpetuity of their King's Reign. In the Hiſtory of *Saul*, who was their firſt King, and of *David*, who was three Times anointed, we find no mention made of any Spring or Fountain. As theſe Fountains however were Places of great Concourſe, (for there were not many in *Jeruſalem*) the chief Reaſon, we may imagine, why *David* order'd *Solomon* to be anointed at one of theſe, was, that the Thing might be done as publickly, and in the Preſence of as many Spectators, as poſſible. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

* There is no Precept in the *Law* to make the Altar a privileg'd Place; but, in Conformity to the Cuſtoms of other Nations, the *Jews* ſeem to have done it. Other Nations had certainly this Cuſtom, as appears from that Paſſage in *Virgil*:

Talibus orabat dictis, araſque tenebat. Æneid. vi.

And it ſeems not unlikely, that, as the People, when they came into the Land of *Canaan*, had Cities appointed by God, whereunto the *Manſlayer might flee*; ſo, while they continu'd in the Wilderneſs, the Camp of the *Levites* might ſerve for the ſame Purpoſe. Nay, from the Words in *Exodus* xxi. 14. where God orders the wilful Murtherer *to be taken from his Altar, that he may die*, it ſeems unqueſtionab'y true, that, even in the Land of *Canaan*, the Altar continu'd a Sanctuary for thoſe who fled unto it; but then the Queſtion is, to what Altar *Adonijah* fled; Whether to the *brazen* one, which *Moſes* made, and which was now at *Gibeon*, or that which his Father had lately erected in the Threſhing-Floor of *Araunah?* 'Tis expreſsly ſaid, 1 *Kings* i. 50. that *he caught hold of the Horns of the Altar*; but we can hardly ſuppoſe, *ſay ſome*, that the Altar in the Threſhing Floor, which was run up in ſuch Haſte with Stones and Turf, was made in that Figure. But what ſhould hinder us from ſuppoſing, that, as *David* had built a Place for the Reception of the Ark of the Covenant on Mount *Sion*, he had likewiſe built there an Altar, for the Oblation of the daily Sacrifices, in the exact Form of the *original* one, that was then at *Gibeon*, and that it was to this Altar, and neither of the others, that *Adonijah* betook himſelf for Refuge. *Le Clerc*'s, *Patrick*'s, and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

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When having recover'd a little from his late Indiſpoſition, he ſtood up, and * in a ſolemn *Oration*, put them in Mind of God's Goodneſs to him, and of his Deſignation of *Solomon* to ſucceed in his Throne, and to build him a Temple. And therefore, ſince he had reſerv'd that Honour for his Son, he earneſtly recommended to him a ſtrict Fidelity and Piety towards God, and a zealous Diſcharge of this important Truſt. To this Purpoſe he gave him the *Plan*, which he had made for the Execution of this Undertaking, and an Account of the Treaſures, which he had provided for the perfecting of this great Work. He gave him alſo a Liſt of the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, and the *Courſes*, in which they were to wait in the Temple: He gave him likewiſe the *Schemes*, and Regulations of the Officers of his Court, of the *civil* Officers, of the Treaſurers, and of the Superintendants of the *Revenues*, belonging to the Crown; and, having made a large Oblation of Money out of his own private Eſtate for the Building of the Temple, by his Example and Perſuaſion, he prevail'd with the *Princes*, and the People to contribute (according to their Abilities) to ſo good and pious a Work. And when he found himſelf ſucceſsful herein, (for what they gave upon this Occaſion amounted to an immenſe Sum) he concluded all with a ſolemn Thankſgiving to God, and a *Prayer*, that he would enable *Solomon* to perfect what he had thus deſign'd, and recommended. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

The next Day there was a very great and ſolemn *Sacrifice*, and much Rejoicing among the People. *David*, upon this Occaſion, had *Solomon* anointed a ſecond Time in a more publick Manner; order'd that *Zadok* ſhould be the High-Prieſt in the Room of *Abiathar*, who had publickly eſpous'd the Intereſt of *Adonijah*; and (to put an End to all Diſputes after his Deceaſe) had him for the future ſeated on a *royal* Throne, and made ſole Regent of the Kingdom during his Life-Time.

And dying Charge to his Son Solomon.

Not long after this, *David*, perceiving his End approaching, called for *Solomon*, * and gave him his laſt Exhortation, which

* The Speech which *Joſephus* puts in *David*'s Mouth upon this Occaſion, is to this Purpoſe: ——"I am now "to inform you, my Countrymen and Brethren, that I have had it a long Time in my Thoughts to erect a Temple "to the Lord, and have treaſur'd up a mighty Maſs of Gold and Silver toward the Charge of the Undertaking; but "it hath pleas'd God in his Providence, by the Mouth of his Prophet *Nathan*, to put a Stop to my Deſign, upon this "Conſideration, that he would not have the Foundation of his holy Houſe laid by Hands, that have been dipp'd in "Blood, which mine inevitably have been, (tho' in the Blood of your Enemies) in the Wars I have been forc'd to "engage in, for the neceſſary Defence of your Liberties: But, at the ſame Time that he forbid me to do this, the "Prophet inform'd me, that God had tranſmitted the Care of the whole Work to my Son and Succeſſor. Our Fa"ther *Jacob* (as you all very well know) had twelve Sons, and yet *Judah* was choſen by common Conſent to be "Ruler of all the reſt. You know likewiſe, that I myſelf (tho' there were then ſix Brothers of us) was advanc'd by "God to the Government, and that none of the reſt thought themſelves injur'd: Wherefore I muſt now, in like "Manner, require it of you, and of all your Sons, that you ſubmit chearfully and dutifully to my Son *Solomon*, and "that ye do it without any Grumbling, or civil Diſſenſion, becauſe it is from God's immediate Command and Com"miſſion, that he derives his Authority. Put the Caſe now, that God ſhould have ſet a Stranger over you, how "great a Folly and Madneſs would it have been for you to murmur at it? But how thankful ought you to be, for "the Choice of ſo near a Relation, when you yourſelves are Partakers of the Honour, that is done to your Brother? "There is nothing I ſo much long for, as to ſee God's gracious Promiſes take a ſpeedy Effect, and the whole Peo"ple put into a laſting Poſſeſſion of the Bleſſings, they are to enjoy under the Reign of *Solomon*. And all this, my "dear Son, (*ſays he, turning to* Solomon) will be made good, and every Thing ſucceed to your Wiſh, ſo long as "you govern according to Piety and Juſtice, with a Reſpect to your Duty both towards God and Man, uphold"ing a Reverence to the Laws, and treading in the Steps of your Forefathers: But, whenever you paſs theſe "Bounds, there is nothing but Ruin and Miſery to be expected."

* *Joſephus* introduces *David*, as taking his laſt Leave of his Son *Solomon* in theſe Words: ——"And now, "Son, I am going to my Fathers, and you, that I leave behind me, are in due Time to follow, which is no more "than paying a common Debt to Nature. There is no returning from the Grave, and, when we are once gone "we have done with this World for ever. Wherefore, while I am yet among the Living, and before it be too "late, pray let me remind you of the ſame Things once more.——Govern your Subjects according to "Juſtice. Worſhip that God, from whom you have receiv'd your *Dignity*, as well as your *Being*, as you are bound "to do. Obſerve his Precepts, and keep his Laws, as they have been handed down to you from *Moſes*, and have "a Care that you never forſake them, either for Fear, Flattery, or any Paſſion, or Intereſt whatſoever; for other-

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

which was, to be conſtant in his Duty to God, *(i) to walk in his Ways, and* † *keep his Statutes, and his Commandments, his Judgments, and his Teſtimonies, that he might proſper in all that he did*; and then deſcending to ſome particular Affairs relating to the *State*, he charg'd him to do Juſtice to *Joab*, for the many Murders he had been guilty of; to ſhew Kindneſs to the Sons of *Barzillai*, for the Support their Father had given him in his Diſtreſs; and tho' he himſelf had not put *Shimei* to death for his paſt Offences, yet whenever he ſhould prove guilty again, not to ſpare him. Having thus ended his Exhortation to his Son, in a ſhort Time after he died, in the ſeventy-firſt Year of his Age; after he had reign'd forty Years in all, ‖ *ſeven* in *Hebron*, and *three and thirty* in *Jeruſalem*; and * was buried in that Part of the City, which himſelf had taken from the *Jebuſites*, and called after his own Name.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

WHEN

" wiſe you can never hope for the Bleſſings of God's Favour and Providence: But if you behave yourſelf with " Reverence and Submiſſion towards God, as you ought to do, and as I wiſh you may do, your Kingdom will be " eſtabliſh'd to yourſelf, and the Succeſſion of it continu'd to your Family from Generation to Generation." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. ii. c. 12.

(i) 1 Kings ii. 3,——11.

† Under theſe four Words are comprehended all the Laws of *Moſes*. *Statutes* were ſuch *Conſtitutions*, as had their Foundation, not in Reaſon, but in the Will and Pleaſure of God; ſuch was the Prohibition of ſowing Seeds of different Kinds together, &c. *Commandments* were moral Duties, that were founded in the Nature of Things, and carry'd their Reaſon along with them; as not to ſteal, not to murther, &c. *Judgments* were the Laws belonging to Civil Government, and the Dealings of one Man with another; ſuch are all thoſe Laws, that are recorded in the Twenty-firſt and following Chapters of *Exodus*; and *Teſtimonies* were ſuch Laws, as preſerv'd the Remembrance of ſome great Events, and *teſtify'd* to Men the Loving-Kindneſs of the Lord; ſuch as the *Sabbath*, the *Paſſover*, and the reſt of the *Feaſts*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

‖ In 2 *Sam.* v. 5. it is ſaid, that he reign'd ſeven Years and ſix Months in *Hebron*, which, together with the three and thirty in *Jeruſalem*, will make his Reign to be in all forty Years and a half. To ſolve this Difficulty, (as ſome of the *Jews* eſteem it) they have deviſ'd a Conceit, that, to puniſh *David* for his Adultery with *Bathſheba*, God ſent upon him a *Leproſy*, which continu'd for ſix Months, in all which Time he was look'd upon as dead, and not accounted to reign: But they never conſider'd, that theſe Months were Part of his Reign in *Hebron*, before he committed that Adultery in *Jeruſalem*. The true Account of the Matter therefore is, that it is very uſual, in Scripture-Computation, to omit ſmaller Sums, and only reckon by a round Number; for which Reaſon theſe ſix Months, which were but Part of a Year, are not taken Notice of in the Account both of *Kings*, 1 Kings ii. 11. and *Chronicles*, 1 Chron. xxix. 26, 27. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

* After this Account, which *Joſephus* gives us of *David*'s ſeveral Speeches before his Death, he informs us,—— " That he was bury'd at *Jeruſalem* with a Solemnity of royal Pomp and Magnificence, that was glorious to the higheſt " Degree, and that, over and above the Splendor of the Ceremony, his Son *Solomon* depoſited in his Monument an " ineſtimable Treaſure, from which, when *Antiochus*, ſirnam'd the *Pious*, beſieg'd *Jeruſalem*, *Hircanus*, the High- " Prieſt, took to the Sum of *three Thouſand Talents*, and therewith brib'd them to raiſe the Siege; and that, many " Years after this, *Herod*, ſirnam'd the *Great*, took another immenſe Sum from thence, which enabl'd him to re- " build the Temple." Among ſeveral Nations indeed it was cuſtomary to bury, along with Princes, and other great Men, various Things of Value, that they took Delight in while they liv'd. The *Egyptians* were us'd to this; and about their *Mummies* are frequently found very precious Ornaments. When *Alexander the Great* had *Cyrus*'s Tomb open'd, there was found therein a Bed of Gold, a very rich Table, drinking Cups, and many fine Veſtments; but, notwithſtanding all this, ſeveral learned Men look upon this whole Account of *Joſephus* as a mere Fable. For, to what Purpoſe, *ſay they*, did *Solomon* bury all this Treaſure under Ground, when he had ſo much Occaſion for it; when he was forc'd to borrow Money of the King of *Tyre*, and burthen his People with ſo many heavy Taxes to ſupply his exceſſive Expences? How came it, that the other Kings of *Judah*, who were frequently put to the Neceſſity of ſtripping the Temple of its precious Furniture to ſatisfy their greedy Enemies, never once adventur'd to lay hold on this Treaſure? How came it to eſcape the Hands of the *Chaldeans*, and other Nations, that ſo often had the Plundering of *Jeruſalem*? Or why ſhould *Hircanus* violate this *Depoſitum*, which his Predeceſſors eſteem'd more ſacred than the holy Veſſels of the Lord? Theſe are Queſtions, that cannot eaſily be reſolv'd; and, (what is a farther Confutation of this Story) in that very Book, from whence *Joſephus* is ſuppos'd to have taken it, it is never once ſaid, that *Hircanus* broke open *David*'s Tomb. The Words of that *ſpurious* Author are, that Hircanus, *while he was beſieg'd by* Antiochus, *open'd a Treaſure-Chamber, which belong'd to ſome of* David's *Deſcendants, and that, after he had taken a large Sum of Money out of it, he ſtill left a great deal in it, and ſeal'd it up again*: But this is quite a different Thing, and has no Manner of Relation to the Sepulchre of *David*. As to the *real* Sepulchre of *David*, 'tis certain, that it was always held in great Veneration among the *Jews*. It was in Being in St *Peter*'s Time, for ſo he tells the People, *Acts* ii. 29. *Dio* (in *Adriani* vitâ) informs us, that Part of it was fallen down in the Emperor *Adrian*'s Reign. St *Jerom* relates, that he himſelf us'd frequently to go and pray at it; and modern *Travellers* (as we took

Notice

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Solomon *ſucceeds his Father* David, *and cuts off his chief Adverſaries.*

WHEN *David* was dead, *Solomon* ſucceeded to the Throne; and, to ſecure his Poſſeſſion, took an Occaſion, in a ſhort Time, to rid himſelf of his Adverſaries. *Adonijah*, in his Father's Life-time, made bold Pretenſions, but was defeated, and pardon'd by *Solomon*, upon Condition that he would become a good *Subject*, and give him no farther Moleſtation; but by the Perſuaſion of *Joab*, and *Abiathar*, he was now put upon another bold Project, which was to deſire *Abiſhag* (the late King's *Concubine* in his old Age) in Marriage, hoping thereby to ſtrengthen his Intereſt, and to be able to play an *After-game* for the Crown. To this Purpoſe he prevail'd with *Bathſheba*, the *Queen-Mother*, to ſpeak to the King: But the King was ſo far from granting his Requeſt, that he was ſhock'd at the Boldneſs of it, and, ſuſpecting ſome treaſonable Deſign at the Bottom, ſent immediately, and had him put to Death. In the next Place, he baniſh'd *Abiathar*; and, having inhibited him from the Exerciſes of his *prieſtly* Office, confin'd him to his *Country-Houſe*, and put *Zadok* in his Place; and, when he heard that *Joab* was fled into the *Tabernacle* for *Sanctuary*, upon his refuſing to come out at his Command, † he order'd *Benaiah* (whom he afterwards made *General* in his Room) to go in, and kill him there. But when *Shimei*, who deſerv'd the like Fate for his groſs Abuſe of the late King, was brought before him, he only † confin'd him to *Jeruſalem*, as a Priſoner at large, but with a ſtrict Injunction not to move out of the Place upon Pain of Death. Upon this Condition he thankfully accepted of his Life, and, for ſome Time, kept within the Bounds of his Confinement; but having ſome Slaves, who had run away, and

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

Notice before) deſcribe ſome magnificent Monuments hew'd in a Rock, not far from *Jeruſalem*, which are doubtleſs very *antient*, but they themſelves do not agree, that they were the Sepulchres of the Kings of *Judah*. 'Tis ſomewhat unaccountable however, that the Place of this Prince's Sepulchre, which both the *Chaldeans* and the *Romans*, when they took *Jeruſalem*, thought proper to ſpare, ſhould now be ſo entirely loſt, that we cannot find the leaſt Remains of it. But tho' Providence has ſo order'd it, that the Place of *David*'s Sepulchre ſhould not at preſent be known, yet there does not want an eternal *Monument* of his moſt excellent *Genius*. The Book of *Pſalms*, which for the moſt Part was compos'd by him, does publiſh the Glory of its Author more than the moſt pompous *Elogies*, and the Author of *Eccleſiaſticus* (Chap. xlvii. 2, &c.) has conſecrated this *Epitaph* to his Memory, which is more durable than either *Marble* or *Braſs*: ——— *As the Fat is taken away from the Peace-Offering, ſo was* David *choſen out of the People of* Iſrael. *He played with Lions as with Kids, and with Bears as with Lambs; he ſlew a Giant when he was young, and took away Reproach from the People; for he called upon the Moſt High Lord, and he gave Strength to his Right-Hand to ſlay this mighty Warrior, and to ſet up the Horn of his People. So the People honoured him with ten Thouſands, and praiſed him in Bleſſings of the Lord; for he deſtroyed the Enemies on every Side, and brought to nought the* Philiſtines, *his Adverſaries:* ——*In all his Works he praiſed the holy One moſt high, and bleſſed the Lord with Words of Glory:* —— *He ſet Singers alſo before the Altar, that, by their Voices, they might make ſweet Melody, and daily ſing Praiſes in their Songs. He beautified their Feaſts, and ſet their ſolemn Times in perfect Order:* ——— *The Lord took away his Sins, and exalted his Horn for ever; he gave him a Covenant of Kings, and a Throne of Glory in* Iſrael. *Calmet*'s Commentary, and his Dictionary, under the Word *David*.

† It was formerly very cuſtomary among Princes, to employ their Officers, or greateſt Confidants, in ſuch like Executions. Among the *Romans*, the Soldiers were always the Perſons, who carry'd to Priſon, to Torture, or to Execution, ſuch as were found guilty of any Offence; and this *Tertullian* makes an Argument to diſſuade *Chriſtians* from engaging in the Wars, leſt thereby they ſhould be oblig'd to impriſon, puniſh, or execute Malefactors. In *Dan.* ii. 24. we read, that Nebuchadnezzar *ſent* Arioch, *who was chief Commander of his Troops, to deſtroy the Wiſe-Men of* Babylon, becauſe they could not interpret his Dream; and therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find *Solomon* employing *Benaiah*, the Captain of his Guard, on the like Office: But whether he did not firſt drag *Joab* from the Altar, before he ſlew him, for fear of polluting the holy Place with Blood, or whether *Solomon* did not rather think fit to have him kill'd even at the Altar, and let all Men ſee, that no Place, though never ſo ſacred, ſhould ſecure any Man from the Hand of Juſtice, Commentators have not agreed. *Calmet*'s and *Patrick*'s Commentaries.

† *Shimei*, as we read, was a very powerful Man. When he came to meet King *David*, and to beg Pardon for his Offence, he had a Thouſand of his own Tribe to accompany him, 2 *Sam.* xix. 17. and therefore *Solomon* might think proper to confine him to the City of *Jeruſalem*, that, being remov'd from the Place, where his Family and Intereſt lay, to one where he was but a Stranger, and ſufficiently odious for his former *ill Treatment* of the late King, he might be incapable of raiſing any Tumults, or Seditions; and that, being in this *publick Theatre*, all his Words and Actions might be narrowly obſerv'd, which, conſidering his buſy and wicked Temper, might give *Solomon* a fair Advantage againſt him; and (as the Manner of ſome is) the very Prohibition itſelf might probably inflame his Deſire to tranſgreſs it. *Poole*'s Annotations.

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and had enter'd themſelves into † the Service of *Achiſh*, King of *Gath*, he imprudently went to reclaim them, and, upon his Return, by *Solomon*'s Order, was put to Death.

HAVING thus ſecur'd his Kingdom *at home*, by confining, or cutting off the Heads of the *Faction*, that was againſt him, *Solomon* bethought himſelf of ſtrengthening his Intereſt *Abroad* by foreign Alliances; and, to this Purpoſe, married the Daughter of † *Pharaoh* King of *Egypt*, and appointed her at firſt an Apartment in his own Palace; but, after he had finiſh'd the Temple, built her a very ſtately Palace adjoining to his own, which ſhe badly deſerv'd; for, in Proceſs of Time, this Woman, among others, contributed not a little to the *Perverſion* of *Solomon*.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

Begins his Reign with a good Senſe of Religion.

HE began his Reign however with a good Senſe of Religion upon his Mind; for which End, taking the Chief of the Officers and Nobility along with him, he went to *Gibeon*, where the *original Tabernacle* and *Altar*, that were made in the *Wilderneſs*, were kept, and there offer'd a Thouſand Sacrifices, in Acknowledgment of God's Kindneſs to him, in placing him upon his Father's Throne. In the Night following, when God appear'd to him in a Viſion, and promis'd to grant whatever he ſhould aſk, he begg'd him to give him † a wiſe and underſtanding Heart, and († conſidering his Youth and Inexperience) ſuch Qualities, as were neceſſary

† *Achiſh* had been ſo great a Friend to *David*, that, though *David* had conquer'd the *Philiſtines*, he ſuffer'd him ſtill to retain the Title of a King, and only to be *tributary* to him; ſo that there was a friendly Correſpondence between his City and *Jeruſalem*, inſomuch, that *Shimei* might eaſily hear, by ſomebody or other, that had been at *Gath*, that his Servants were there. Theſe Servants, in all Probability, were ſuch, as he had purchas'd with a conſiderable Sum of Money, and their Running away was not only a Loſs, but a great Affront likewiſe to their Maſter; and therefore, partly out of *Rage*, and partly through *Covetouſneſs*, he undertook this dangerous Journey, preſuming, that a Thing, which might be done ſecretly and ſpeedily, would never come to *Solomon*'s Ears; that, in the Space of three Years Time, *Solomon* might have forgot his Injunction; or, that, if he remember'd it, he would not be ſo rigid, as to put it in Execution; eſpecially ſince he went out of *Jeruſalem*, not through Wantonneſs, or any Contempt of *Authority*, but merely to recover what he had loſt, which, he might think, was a Thing excuſable. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† It may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange, that, in all the Hiſtory of the *Jews*, from the Time of *Moſes* to this of *Solomon*, no Mention ſhould be made of the Kings of *Egypt*, as if they had no Concern in the Affairs of *Canaan*, but were wholly diverted ſome other Way: But for this their own Hiſtorians account, when they tell us, that, during this Space of Time, the *Egyptian Kings did nothing worth recording*, Diodor. Biblioth. lib. i. p. 29. All theſe Kings of *Egypt* were called *Pharaohs*; but *Pharaoh* was not a *proper* Name, but a Title of *Dignity* only, which imported the ſame as *Sultan*, or *Emperor*. They had, beſides this, other Names, and *Clemens Alexandrinus*, in a Paſſage taken from *Alexander Polyhiſtor*, tells us, that the *proper* Name of this *Egyptian King*, whoſe Daughter *Solomon* marry'd, was *Vaphres*. *Le Clerc*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† Hereupon ſome *Jewiſh* Annotators have obſerv'd, that tho' *Solomon*, in his great Modeſty, might requeſt of God no more than the Gift of *Government*, or (as he expreſſes it) *an underſtanding Heart to judge the People, and to diſcern between Good and Evil*, 1 Kings iii. 9. yet God, out of his abundant Grace, gave him a general Knowledge of all other Things, as the following Hiſtory informs us: And that, whereas other Men gather their Knowledge from Study and Obſervation, *Solomon* had his by an immediate *Inſpiration* from God, inſomuch, that *he, who went to Bed as ignorant as other Men, awak'd in the Morning like an Angel of God*. But though his Knowledge of Things was, in a great Meaſure, infus'd, yet he did not therefore neglect his Study. *He gave his Heart to ſeek, and ſearch out, by Wiſdom, concerning all Things under the Sun*; in which *Search* (as himſelf teſtifies, *Eccleſ.* i. 13.) he took no ſmall Pains: So that his Gifts *extraordinary* did not ſuperſede the Uſe of other Means, in the Acquiſition of Knowledge, but, by Application and Experience, he perfected what he had ſo advantageouſly receiv'd from the Hands of God. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† The Words of *Solomon* himſelf are,——*I am but a little Child; I know not how to go out, or how to come in*, 1 Kings iii. 7. From whence ſome have inferr'd, that he was not above twelve Years old when he ſpake them; but this muſt be a groſs Miſcomputation. His Father, when he left the Kingdom to him, calls him a *wiſe Man*, 1 Kings ii. 6, 9. The foregoing Story ſhews, that he had already ſat ſome Time on the *Throne*; and therefore he calls himſelf a *Child*, not in Reſpect of his Years, (for moſt agree that he was twenty, when he began to reign) but his Skill in governing the People, and managing the Affairs of State. This was a *modeſt* Expreſſion in *Solomon*; but it is an Obſervation of *Ariſtotle*, in his Book of *Politicks*, that young Men are unfit for Government, becauſe their *conſultative Power* is imperfect; which, though it may not be a general Rule, was deliver'd by *Solomon* himſelf, in his more mature Years, for a *Maxim*; for *Woe to the Land*, (ſays he, *Eccleſ.* x. 16.) *whoſe King is a Child*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

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ceſſary for the due Government of the People committed to his Charge; which Petition God was ſo well pleas'd with, that, over and above the Wiſdom which he aſk'd, he promis'd to give him ſuch Affluence of Riches and Honour, as no King, in his Days, ſhould be able to equalize. When *Solomon* awak'd out of Sleep, he perceiv'd that this was a Dream ſent from God; and therefore, returning to *Jeruſalem*, he preſented himſelf before the Ark *of the Covenant*, which was plac'd in a *Tabernacle*, that *David* had made for it, and there he offer'd Sacrifices in Abundance.

And great Demonſtrations of his Wiſdom.

SOLOMON (as we ſaid) had obtain'd of God a Promiſe of the Gift of *Wiſdom*; and it was not long before he had an Opportunity of ſhewing it, to the great Satisfaction of all his Subjects. † Two Women, who both liv'd together in one Houſe, were brought to Bed about the ſame Time, and one had overlaid her Child. She, who found the *dead* Child by her, accus'd the other of having ſtolen away her *living* Child, and left her dead one in its Place: The other pertinaciouſly denied the Thing, ſo that the Queſtion was, *To whom did this living Child belong?* And to determine this, *Solomon* commanded ſome that ſtood by, to take and † cut the Child in two, and to give to each Woman half; whereupon the *real* Mother begs that the Child may be ſav'd, even tho' it be given to her Adverſary, but the pretended one is clearly for dividing it; which gave *Solomon* a full Conviction, that ſhe, who expreſs'd a Tenderneſs and Compaſſion for the Child, was its true Mother, and accordingly order'd it to be given her.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

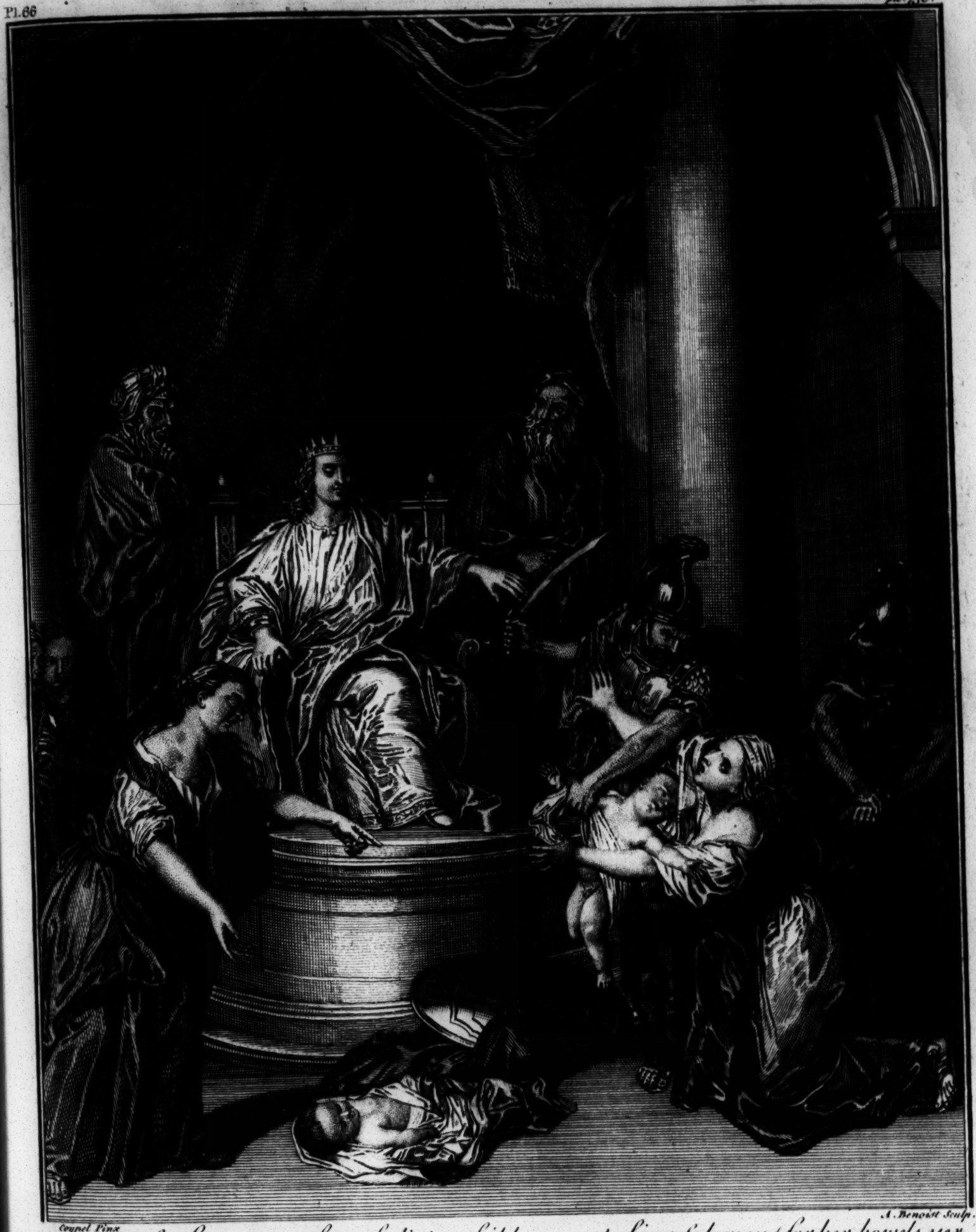
His large Dominions, and wonderful Learning, and Writings.

THE Wiſdom of the King ſoon ſhed an happy Influence over all his Dominions, and every Subject was, in ſome Degree or other, made Partaker of it. All *Judah* and *Iſrael* liv'd in the greateſt Security; and all the neighbouring Nations either paid him *Tribute*, or were his Friends and Allies. He rul'd over all the Countries and Kingdoms, † from the *Euphrates*

† Theſe two Women are ſaid in the *Text* to be *Harlots*, but the *Hebrew* Word (as we took Notice in the Caſe of *Rahab*) may equally ſignify an *Hoſteſs*, or one, who kept an Houſe of *publick* Entertainment; and that it is ſo to be taken here, we have theſe Reaſons to preſume:——That, as all publick *Proſtitution* was ſeverely forbidden by the Law, *Deut.* xxiii. 17. Women of this infamous Character durſt not have preſented themſelves before ſo juſt and ſo wiſe a King; that Women of this lewd Behaviour ſeldom do become Mothers of Children, and when they chance to have any, are not ſo ſollicitous for their Preſervation, but rather rejoice when they have got rid of them. There is no Reaſon to ſuppoſe then, that theſe Women were common *Harlots*; and yet it is generally thought, that they were both *unmarry'd* Perſons, and guilty of *Fornication*, becauſe no Mention is made of their Huſbands, whoſe Office it was (if they had any) to conteſt the Matter for their Wives. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† *Solomon* knew at once, that the only Sign that would diſcover the *true*, would be her Affection, and Compaſſion, and Tenderneſs for her Child; and therefore, in order to diſtinguiſh between the two, his Buſineſs was to make Trial of this: And if we ſuppoſe, that, when he commanded the Child *to be divided*, he ſpake with a ſedate Countenance, and ſeeming Earneſtneſs, (as the true Mother's Petition to the King makes it apparent that he did) then we may ſuppoſe farther, not only the two Women, but all the People preſent with Horror and Admiration expecting the Execution of the Thing; which, when it ended in ſo juſt a *Deciſion*, quite contrary to what they look'd for, rais'd Joy in every Breaſt, and gave a more advantageous Commendation to the Judge: And yet *Abarbinel*, the *Jewiſh* Commentator, thinks, that all this was no great Proof of *Solomon*'s extraordinary Wiſdom, nor could it beget that Fear or Reverence, which the *Text* ſays (1 *Kings* iii. 28. it procur'd to his Perſon. His Opinion therefore is, that *Solomon* made a Diſcovery of the Truth antecedent to this *Experiment*; that, by obſerving the Countenance, the Manner of Speech, and all the Motions of the Women, he diſcern'd the Secret of their Hearts, and penetrated to the Bottom of the Buſineſs; and that his commanding the Child to be *divided* afterwards was only to notify to the Company, what he before had *diſcover'd*. However this be, it may not be improper, upon this Occaſion, to mention an Inſtance or two out of profane Hiſtory, of a ſingular *Addreſs* (though much inferior to this) in diſcovering ſuch Secrets, as ſeem'd to be paſt finding out. To this Purpoſe, *Suetonius* (in his Life of *Claudian*, Chap. 15.) tells us, how that Emperor diſcover'd a Woman to be the Mother of a young Man, whom ſhe would not own for her Son, by commanding her to be marry'd to him; for the Horror of committing *Inceſt* oblig'd her to declare the Truth; and, in like Manner, *Diodorus Siculus* relates, how *Ariopharnes*, King of the *Thracians*, being appointed to arbitrate between three Men, who all pretended to be Sons of the King of the *Cimmerians*, and claim'd the Succeſſion, found out the true Son and Heir, by ordering them to ſhoot, each Man his Arrow, into the dead King's Body, which one of them refuſing to do, was deem'd the true Claimant. *Pool*'s Annotations, *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† The Words in the Text are, *And* Solomon *reigned over all Kingdoms from the River unto the Land of the* Philiſtines,



Coypel Pinx. A. Benoist Sculp.

Then spake the woman whose the living child was, unto king Solomon (for her bowels yerned upon her son) & she said, O my lord, give her the living child, & in no wise slay it: but the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. 1 Kings. Chap: III. Ver: 26.

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phrates to the *Nile*, and in many Places his Dominions extended beyond the *Euphrates*. He had a great Number of Horſes and Chariots of War. Inſtances of his Wiſdom were as numerous as *the Sands of the Sea*, and in Learning and Knowledge he † ſurpaſs'd all the *Orientals*, and the *Egyptians*. In a Word, he was the wiſeſt of Mankind, and his Reputation was ſpread thro' all Nations. He compos'd, or collected, * *Three Thouſand Proverbs*, and a † *Thouſand and five Poems*. He knew the Virtue of all Plants and Trees, from the higheſt to the loweſt; and in his Books treated of the Nature of † all Kinds of Beaſts, and Birds,

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

ſtines *and unto the Border of* Egypt, 1 Kings iv. 21. for the Bounds of his Kingdom were to the *Eaſt*, the *Euphrates*, which is here, and in other Places of Scripture, called the *River*, without any Addition; to the *Weſt*, the Country of the *Philiſtines*, which border'd upon the *Mediterranean Sea*; and to the *South*, *Egypt*. So that *Solomon* had tributary to him the Kingdoms of *Syria*, *Damaſcus*, *Moab*, and *Ammon*, which lay between *Euphrates* and the *Mediterranean*; as indeed, without ſuch a Number of *tributary* Kingdoms, we cannot conceive, how the Country of *Iſrael* could have furniſh'd ſuch a conſtant Supply of Proviſions, and other Things neceſſary for the Support of this Prince's *Grandeur*. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries.

† There were three Nations in the *Eaſt* of *Canaan*, that were very famous for their Wiſdom and Erudition; the *Chaldeans*, beyond the *Euphrates*; the *Perſians*, beyond the *Tigris*; and the *Arabians*, on the nearer Side of the *Euphrates*, a little towards the *South*: But whether the *Perſians* and *Chaldeans* were remarkable for their Learning in *Solomon*'s Days, is much doubted among *Commentators*. The Book of *Job* ſufficiently ſhews, that the *Arabians* (for of that Nation was *Job* and his Friends) were famous for their Learning in *antient* Times: And, as to the *Chaldeans* and other *oriental* People, ſince the Sons of *Noah* took up their Habitation about *Babylon*, and the neighbouring Countries, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that, where Mankind firſt began to ſettle themſelves into regular Societies, there Arts and Sciences firſt began to appear. The *Egyptians* however pretend to a Precedency in this, and ſeveral other Accompliſhments. They ſay, that the *Chaldeans* receiv'd the Principles of Philoſophy at firſt from a Colony, that came from *Egypt*, as *Diodorus* indeed makes mention of ſuch a Colony, conducted by *Belus*: But the *Chaldeans*, on the other Hand, maintain, that from them it was, that the *Egyptians* receiv'd their firſt Inſtructions, and (according to ſome) that *Abraham* was the Perſon, who firſt communicated to the *Chaldeans* the Knowledge of Aſtronomy, and other Sciences. However this be, *Solomon* receiv'd from God a perfect Knowledge of all that uſeful and ſolid Learning, for which the *Eaſtern* People and the *Egyptians* were juſtly fam'd; for (as it follows) he was a great *moral* Philoſopher, a great *natural* Philoſopher, and an excellent *Poet*. *Patrick*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* *Joſephus*, who lov'd to magnify every Thing, that concern'd *Solomon*, inſtead of *three Thouſand Proverbs*, tells us, that *Solomon* compos'd *three Thouſand Books of Proverbs*: The greater certainly is our Loſs, (if the Thing were credible) becauſe all the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*, that we have now, are compris'd in the Book, that goes under that Name, and in his *Eccleſiaſtes*; and yet ſome learned *Criticks* are of Opinion, that the nine firſt Chapters of the *Book of Proverbs* were not of *Solomon*'s Compoſure, and that the Number of *Proverbs*, which properly belong to him, is no more than *ſix hundred and Fifty*. *Grotius*'s Annotations, and *Calmet*'s Commentary.

† Theſe, one would think, were *Poems* enough, for a Perſon, that had ſo much more other Buſineſs, as King *Solomon* had; but *Joſephus*, who is never content, makes him the Author of *ſo many Volumes of Poetical Compoſitions*; and the *Septuagint* indeed, as well as other Interpreters, make the Number of them to be no leſs, than *five Thouſand Songs*, or *Odes*: But, of all this Number, we have none remaining, but *the Song of Songs*, as it is call'd; except the Hundred and twenty-ſixth *Pſalm*, which (in its *Hebrew* Title) is aſcrib'd to *Solomon*, may be ſuppos'd to be one of theſe. The *Pſalter of Solomon*, which contains eighteen *Pſalms*, (a Work, that was found in *Greek* in the Library of *Auſburg*, and has been tranſlated into *Latin* by *John Lewis de la Cerda*) is ſuppos'd by the Learned to be none of *Solomon*'s, but of ſome *Helleniſtical Jew*, much converſant in reading the ſacred Authors, and who had compos'd them in Imitation of the *Pſalms* of *David*, whoſe Stile he cloſely purſu'd, and had inſerted ſeveral Paſſages of the *Prophets*, (eſpecially of *Iſaiah* and *Ezekiel*) which he accommodated well enough to his Purpoſe. However this be, theſe *eighteen Pſalms* were not unknown to the Antients; for they were formerly in the famous *Alexandrian* Manuſcript, which is with us, as may be ſeen by the *Index*, which is ſtill to be found at the End of the *New Teſtament*, though the *Pſalms* themſelves have either been torn out of the Book, or loſt by ſome Accident. *Le Clerc*'s and *Calmet*'s Commentaries, and his Dictionary, under the Word *Solomon*.

† The ſeveral Books, which treated of the Nature and Virtue of *Animals*, as well as *Plants*, are ſuppos'd to have been loſt in the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; but *Euſebius* (as he is quoted by *Anaſtaſius*) informs us, that King *Hezekiah*, ſeeing the Abuſe which his Subjects made of *Solomon*'s Works, by placing too much Confidence in the Remedies which he preſcrib'd, and the *natural* Secrets which he diſcover'd, thought proper to ſuppreſs them all. Notwithſtanding this, ſince his Time, many Books concerning the *Secrets of Magick*, *Medicine*, and *Inchantments*, have appear'd under the Name of this Prince; and ſeveral Pieces have been quoted, ſuch as *the Inſtructions of* Solomon *to his Son* Rehoboam; *The Teſtament of* Solomon; *The Book of the Throne of* Solomon; *The Books of Magick, compos'd by the Dæmons under the Name of* Solomon; *The Clavicula, or Key of* Solomon; *The Ring of* Solomon; *The Contradiction of* Solomon, *&c.* which were moſt of them very wicked and pernicious Tracts, to which the Authors prefix'd this great Name, to give them more Credit and Sanction. 'Tis ſomewhat ſtrange however, that *Joſephus* ſhould inform us, that *Solomon* compos'd Books of *Inchantments*, and ſeveral Manners of *Exorciſm*, or of driving away Devils, ſo that they could

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Birds, and Reptiles, and Fiſhes; inſomuch, that * there was a Concourſe of Strangers from all Countries to hear his Wiſdom, and Embaſſadors from the moſt remote Princes, that had heard of his Fame.

His League and Contract with Hiram, *King of* Tyre, *for Materials to build the Temple, which accordingly he finiſh'd.*

As ſoon as *Hiram*, King of *Tyre*, underſtood that *Solomon* was † made King of *Iſrael*, * he ſent Embaſſadors to him to condole his Father's Death, and congratulate him upon his Acceſſion to the Throne: And, in a ſhort Time after, *Solomon*, in Return, ſent an Embaſſy to him, deſiring him to ſupply him with Wood, and Workmen, and to lend him his Aſſiſtance in Building *the Temple of the Lord*. *Hiram* very readily complied with his Deſire, and ſent him word, that he would order *Cedar-Trees* and *Fir-Trees* to be cut down upon Mount *Libanus*; that his People ſhould put them on *Floats*, and bring them by Sea to the Harbour of *Joppa*; and that from thence *Solomon*, (who contracted to give *Hiram* ſuch a Quantity of Wheat and Wine, and Oil, &c. every Year for the Maintenance of his Houſhold, and Workmen) might ſend, and fetch them to *Jeruſalem*. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

All

could return no more; and that he ſhould further aſſure us, that himſelf had ſeen Experiments of it by one *Eleazar*, a *Jew*, who, in the Preſence of *Veſpaſian*, his Sons, and the Officers of his Army, cur'd ſeveral, that were poſſeſs'd. *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2. and *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Solomon*.

* It is a Conceit of one of the *Jewiſh* Interpreters, that all the Kings of the neighbouring Countries went to hear the Wiſdom of *Solomon*, and that, upon their Return, their Subjects came to them to hear what he had ſaid; but as we hear of none, but the Queen of *Sheba*, who came to viſit *Solomon*, we cannot but think, that if any other *crown'd Heads* had reſorted to him, the Hiſtory would have recorded them, as well as her. The Words denote no more, than that the Kings of all the neighbouring Nations ſent their Embaſſadors, and People of every Land, that had heard of *Solomon*'s Fame, came to ſee him; for "no Spectacle (ſays an ingenious Author) is more lovely and grateful, than "a wiſe and good King; all Men flock to ſee him, and to partake of his pious and prudent Mind. They that ſee "him, are loth to leave him, and they that hear of him, are as deſirous to ſee him, as Children are to find their un-"known Father." *Dion Pruſæus* Orat. de Regno.

† The ivth Chapter of the firſt of *Kings* is chiefly taken up in recording the Prime Miniſters and Officers of *Solomon*'s Court, the Compaſs and Extent of his Kingdom, the Happineſs and Security of his Subjects, the Pomp and Magnificence of his Living, and the Excellence of his own Wiſdom and Erudition.

* This *Hiram* was doubtleſs the Son of that other *Hiram*, who ſent *David* Timber and Artificers, wherewith to build his Palace: For, if (according to *Joſephus*) the Temple was built in the twelfth Year of *Hiram*'s Reign, and the fourth of *Solomon*'s, this *Hiram* could not be the ſame with him, who ſent *David* Men and Materials; becauſe that *Hiram* was upon the Throne, when *David* took *Jeruſalem*, which happen'd to be three and thirty Years before *Solomon* began his Reign. There are two Letters, which paſs'd between this *Hiram* and King *Solomon*, recorded by *Joſephus*, and for the *Authentickneſs* of which, he appeals both to the *Jewiſh* and *Tyrian* Records, that are to this Effect:

"*King* Solomon, *to* Hiram, *Greeting*.

"Be it known unto thee, O King, that my Father *David* had it a long Time in his Mind and Purpoſe to erect "a Temple to the Lord; but being perpetually in War in his Days, and under a Neceſſity of clearing his Hands "of his Enemies, and making them all his Tributaries, before he could attend this great and holy Work, he hath "left it to me, in a Time of Peace, both to begin and finiſh it, according to the Direction, as well as Prediction of "the Almighty. Bleſſed be his great Name for the preſent Tranquillity of my Dominions! And, by his gracious "Aſſiſtance, I ſhall now dedicate the beſt Improvements of this Liberty and Leiſure to his Honour and Worſhip. "Wherefore I make it my Requeſt, that you will let ſome of your People go along with ſome Servants of mine to "Mount *Libanus*, to aſſiſt them in cutting down Materials towards this Building; (for the *Sydonians* underſtand it "much better than we do) and as for the Workmen's Reward, or Wages, whatever you think reaſonable ſhall be "punctually paid to them."

"*King* Hiram, *to King* Solomon.

"Nothing could have been more welcome to me, than to underſtand, that the Government of your bleſſed Father "is by God's Providence, devolv'd into the Hands of ſo excellent, ſo wiſe, and ſo virtuous a Succeſſor. His holy "Name be prais'd for it! That which you write for ſhall be done with all Care and good Will: For I will give Or-"ders to cut down, and export ſuch Quantities of the faireſt *Cedars*, and *Cypreſs-Trees*, as you ſhall have Occaſion "for. My People ſhall bring them to the Sea-Side for you, and from thence ſhip them away to what Port you pleaſe, "where they may lie ready for your own Men to tranſport them to *Jeruſalem*. It would be a great Obligation, "after all this, to allow us ſuch a Proviſion of Corn in Exchange, as may ſtand with your Convenience; for that is "the Commodity, that we *Iſlanders* want moſt." *Jewiſh* Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2. But, notwithſtanding all his Appeal to the *Tyrian* Records, ſome have ſuſpected *Joſephus*, as to the Genuineneſs of theſe two Letters, eſpecially where they find him bringing in *Hiram*, ſpeaking of *Tyre*, as if it had been an Iſland, whereas it is plain, that the *Old Tyre*, which was then ſtanding, and muſt be the Place here ſpoken of, was ſituate on the *Continent*. *Le Clerc*'s Commentary.

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ALL Things being thus agreed on, the Preparations for the Building of the Temple went on apace. Seventy Thouſand *Proſelytes*, who were the Remains of the antient *Canaanites*, *Solomon* employ'd in carrying Burdens upon their Shoulders; fourſcore Thouſand, in cutting Stone out of the Quarries; and three Thouſand ſix hundred, in overſeeing the Work. Of his own *Subjects*, he ſent thirty Thouſand to work with the King of *Tyre*'s Men in the Quarries of *Libanus*: And (to finiſh the *inner* Part of the Temple, as well as frame ſome of its choiceſt Veſſels) *Hiram* * ſent him a moſt ſkilful Artiſt of his own Name, whoſe Mother was of the Tribe of *Dan*, but his Father a *Tyrian*; and (what was prodigious) his Abilities extended to all Kind of Works, whether in Gold, Silver, Braſs, or Iron, whether in Linnen, Tapeſtry, or Embroidery; and by his Direction all the curious *Furniture* of the Temple was both deſign'd and finiſh'd.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

AND now all Things being in Readineſs, the Foundation of the Temple was laid in the † fourth Year of King *Solomon*'s Reign, in the Year of the *Creation* two Thouſand nine Hundred and ninety two, four Hundred and eighty Years after the *Iſraelites* Eſcape from the *Egyptian* Bondage; and, in the * Space of ſeven Years and an half, was compleated with ſuch *Dexterity*, that neither * *Hammer*, nor *Ax*, nor any Tool of Iron was heard in it, all the while that it was building. Such admirable Care and Contrivance was us'd, in preparing and adjuſting the *Materials*, before they were brought together!

The

* In former Times, among the *Hebrews*, there had been very excellent Workmen, who knew how to cut and engrave precious Stones, to caſt, and work upon Metals, &c. but this was before they came into the Land of *Canaan*, in the Time of *Moſes*, when *Bazaleel* and *Aholiab* were excellent in many different Arts, which were neceſſary for the Work of the Temple, but, as the Scripture acquaints us, that they had their Skill by Inſpiration from God, it does not appear that they had any Succeſſors: And, after the People had got Poſſeſſion of *Canaan*, they neglected all Manufactures, and apply'd themſelves wholly to Agriculture, and Feeding of Cattle; ſo that, in the Time of *Solomon*, there were no profeſs'd Artiſts, that could undertake the Work of the Temple, but in *Tyre* and *Sidon* there were many; for, both in his *Iliads* and his *Odyſſey*, *Homer* gives the People of theſe two Places this Character, whom (upon every Turn) he calls Πολυδαιδαλες, *i. e. excellent Artiſts in ſeveral Kinds of Works*. *Patrick*'s Commentary.

† If it be aſk'd, why *Solomon* did not begin the Building of the Temple ſooner, and even in the firſt Year of his Reign, ſince his Father had left him a *Plan*, and all Things neceſſary for the Undertaking? *Abarbinel*'s Anſwer is,——That *Solomon* would not make uſe of what his Father had prepar'd, but was reſolv'd to build this Temple all at his proper Coſt and Charge. He therefore put into the *Treaſure of the Lord's Houſe* all, that *David* had dedicated to the Work; and, to gather together as much Gold and Silver, as was neceſſary to defray ſo vaſt an Expence, *four Years* can be accounted no unreaſonable Time. Nay, even ſuppoſe that he made uſe of the Treaſure, which his Father had amaſs'd, yet, if the *Materials*, that his Father had provided, lay at a conſiderable Diſtance, and were left rude and unfaſhion'd, it would coſt all this Time to form them into the exact Symmetry, wherein the Scripture repreſents them, before they were brought together, eſpecially conſidering that the very Stones, which made the Foundation, were very probably vaſt *Blocks* of *Marble*, or *Porphyry*, 1 Kings v. 17. And all poliſh'd in the moſt exquiſite Manner. *Patrick*'s Commentary, and *Pool*'s Annotations.

* The Temple itſelf indeed was but a ſmall Edifice, but the many Courts and Offices, that were about it, made the Whole a vaſt Pile, and the Exquiſiteneſs of the Art, and Fewneſs of the Artiſts, that could be employ'd about it, made a longer Time requiſite. It muſt be own'd however, that, conſidering all Things, *Solomon* made an extraordinary Diſpatch: For, if the Building of *Diana*'s Temple at *Epheſus* employ'd all *Aſia*, for the Space of two hundred Years, and no leſs than three hundred and ſixty Thouſand Men, for twenty Years together, were taken up in erecting one *Pyramid*, (as *Pliny*, lib. xxxvi. c. 12, affirms) no reaſonable Man can wonder, that this Temple was ſeven Years and an half in building. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Calmet*'s Commentary.

* The *Jewiſh* Doctors have entertain'd a very odd *Conceit*, upon the Occaſion of this Paſſage in the ſacred Hiſtory, wherein the Temple is ſaid to have been built without Noiſe. They tell us, that the *Dæmon Aſmodeus* drove *Solomon* once from his Throne, and reign'd in his Place, while that Prince was forc'd to travel over the ſeveral Kingdoms and Provinces of the World; but that, at his Return to *Jeruſalem*, he defeated *Aſmodeus*, and having chain'd him ſo, that he could do no Hurt, he compelled him to teach him the Art of cutting Stones for the Temple, without making any Noiſe, which was done, *as they ſay*, not with any Tool or Inſtrument, but by the Help of a *Worm*, called *Samir*, which cuts and poliſhes Stone with a marvellous Facility. But the Foundation of all this Fiction (as *Bochart*, Hieroz. p. 2. lib. vi. c. 11, has obſerv'd) is laid in Somebody's miſtaking the Senſe of the Word *Samir*, which ſignifies a very hard Stone, called *Smiris*, that is, of uſe to cut and poliſh other Stones, and which *Solomon*'s

Workmen

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

The OBJECTION.

" BUT how commendable ſoever the " Zeal both of *David*, and his Son " *Solomon*, to build the Temple of the " Lord, might be; yet we are much in " the wrong, if we think, that this would " be any *Commutation* for the Blood and " Cruelty, which the ſacred Hiſtorian " ſeems to leave charg'd upon them.

" *DAVID* had given *Saul* the moſt " ſolemn Aſſurance upon Oath, that *(k)* " *he would not cut off his Seed, nor deſtroy* " *his Name out of his Father's Houſe*; he " knew full well too, that it was an ex- " preſs Command in the Law, that *(l)* " *Children ſhould not be put to death for* " *the Fathers, but that every Man ſhould* " *be put to death for his own Sin:* And " yet, notwithſtanding this double Obli- " gation, we find him tamely giving up " ſeven of *Saul*'s innocent Progeny (which " he had promis'd to protect) into the " Hands of bloody-minded Men, by " them to be hung up, as long as they " thought fit, in Order to atone for what " *Saul* had done amiſs; and to appeaſe the " Wrath of God, as if he (like the " Idol *Moloch)* could be pleas'd with the " Tortures of the Innocent, or took de- " light in the Oblation of human Blood.

" *SAUL*'s Family was very nume- " rous indeed, and ſome of them might, " in Proceſs of Time, grow up to be an- " other *Iſhboſheth* to *David*, and give him " ſome Diſturbance in his *Uſurpation*. It " was highly neceſſary, therefore, to diſ- " patch thoſe, of whom he might have " any ſuch Apprehenſion, and (if any " were to be left) to ſpare ſuch only, as " were lame and impotent, and incapable " to diſpute his Title. This, in all Pro- " bability, was the Motive of his ſhewing " ſome Favour to *Mephiboſheth*, becauſe " *(m) he was lame in both his Feet*; and " yet he was minded to cut him ſhort and " keep him low, when he granted away " his Eſtate (without ever giving him a " fair Hearing) to a vile and perfidious " Servant; and, notwithſtanding his clear- " ing his Character from every falſe Aſ- " perſion thrown on it, ſtill continuing " the baſe Informer in the full Poſſeſſion " of half of it.

" WHAT the *Zeal* of King *(n) Saul* " *to the Children* of *Iſrael* and *Judah* " might be, that led him into the Error " of deſtroying the *Gibeonites*, we cannot " tell; but ſurely it is unaccountable, " why God did not immediately chaſtiſe " him for it, inſtead of deferring his Pu- " niſhment, and at laſt transferring it to " his Poſterity. His Poſterity perhaps " might be juſtly included in his Puniſh- " ment; but what had the whole Na- " tion done to deſerve a Famine of three " Years Continuance? * *That be far from* " *thee, O Lord, to ſlay the Righteous with* " *the Wicked, and that the Righteous* " *ſhould be as the Wicked, that be far* " *from thee; for ſhall not the Judge of all* " *the Earth do right?*

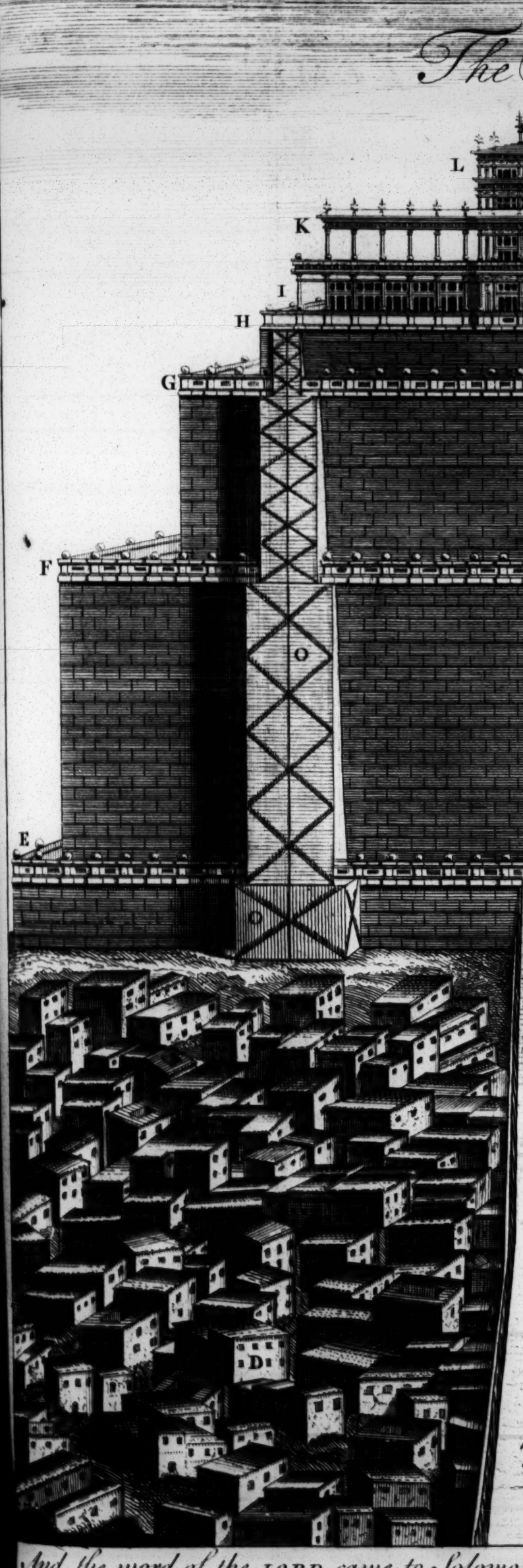
" WE readily grant, that *David*'s re- " ſiſting the Importunity of his Officers, " and promiſing *Shimei* his Life, when ſo " many were ready to put him to Death, " was an Act of great Generoſity, con- " ſidering the Heinouſneſs of his Crime; " but this Promiſe he utterly cancels, when " he leaves it with his Son, as his dying " Injunction,

Workmen might poſſibly have Recourſe to upon this Occaſion. But the true Reaſon why no Noiſe was heard, in the building of the Temple, was, that the Stones and all other Materials were hewn, and ſquar'd, and fitted at a Diſtance, ſo that, when they were brought to the Place, where the Temple was to ſtand, there was nothing to do but to join them together. And this might be done, not only for the Eaſe and Convenience of the Carriage, but for the Magnificence of the Work, and the Commendation of the Workmen's Skill and Ingenuity. *Pool*'s Annotations, and *Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word *Solomon*.

(k) 1 Sam. xxiv. 21. *(l)* Deut. xxiv. 16. *(m)* 2 Sam. ix. 13. *(n)* Ibid. xxi. 2.

* Gen. xviii. 25.

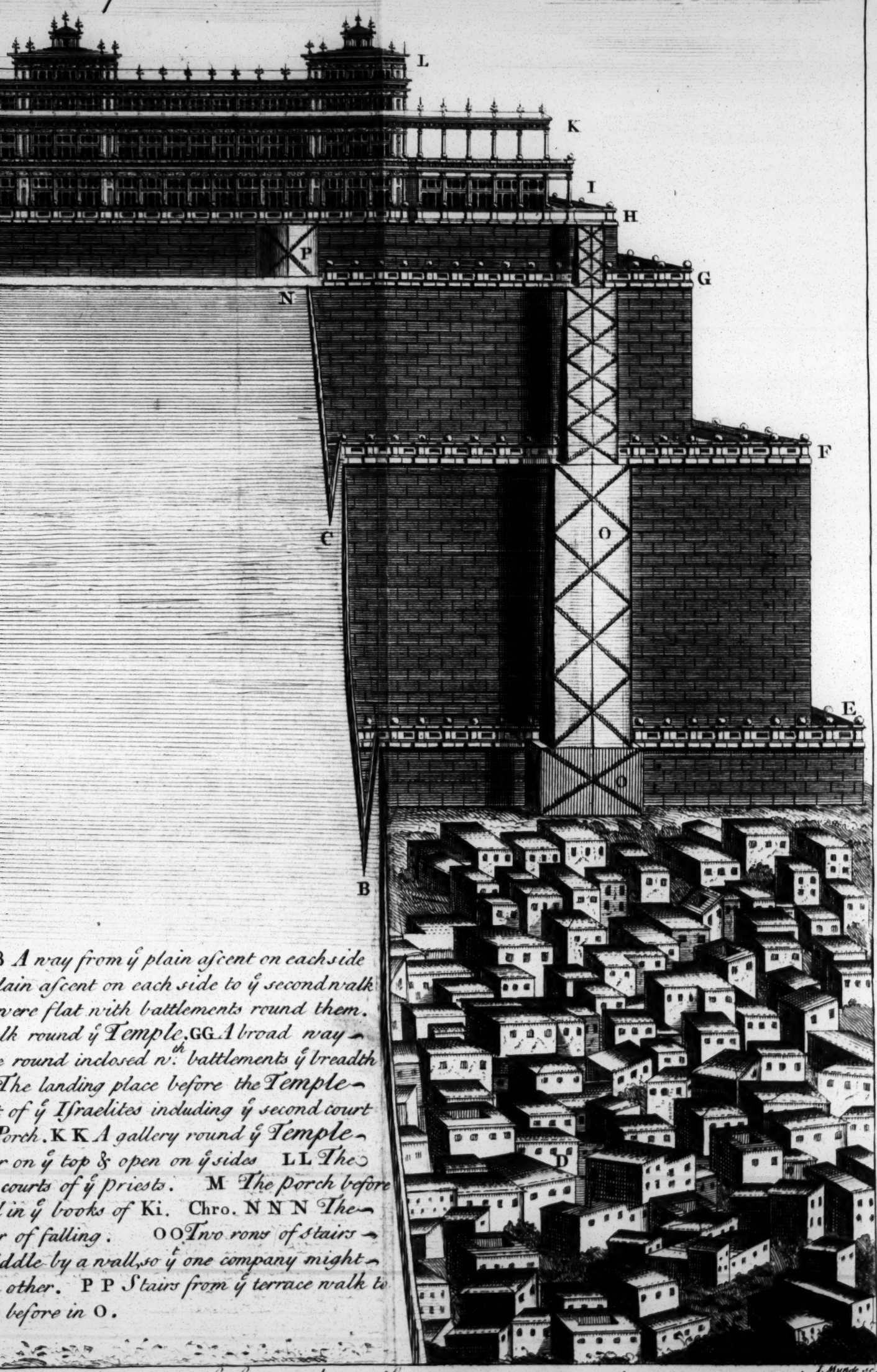
The Prospect of ye East side of



A The plain ascent on ye East side of ye Temple. BB A way from
to ye first walk round ye Temple. CC A way from ye plain ascent on
round ye Temple. DD Part of ye City, where ye roofs were flat wit
EE The first walk round ye Temple. FF The second walk round ye T
before ye Temple like E&F being a Terrace walk quite round inclos
of it as far as P, called ye court of ye Gentiles. HH The landing p
from ye stairs OO & PP. II The first building or ye court of ye Israelit
round ye Temple in ye inside whereof was Solomon's Porch. KK A g
over ye said building for people to walk in cover'd over on ye top &
second building all round ye Temple which included ye courts of ye pr
ye Temple strictly so called being ye part viz. is described in ye books o
terrace walk without battlements there being no danger of falling.
from ye City to ye ground plot of ye Temple, divided in ye middle by a wa
always go up, & ye other down, without interrupting each other. PP
ye body of ye Temple as before in O.

And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying, Concerning this house which thou art in bu
and keep all my Commandments to walk in them: then will I perform my word with thee, which I
children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel. So Solomon built the house, and finished it

...ide of the TEMPLE.



B *A way from ye plain ascent on each side*
plain ascent on each side to ye second walk
were flat with battlements round them.
lk round ye Temple. GG *A broad way*
e round inclosed nr. battlements ye breadth
The landing place before the Temple
t of ye Israelites including ye second court
Porch. KK *A gallery round ye Temple*
r on ye top & open on ye sides LL *The*
courts of ye priests. M *The porch before*
l in ye books of Ki. Chro. NNN *The*
r of falling. OO *Two rows of stairs*
iddle by a wall, so yt one company might
other. PP *Stairs from ye terrace walk to*
before in O.

T. Mynde sc.

art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments,
e, which I spake unto David thy father. And I will dwell among the
inished it. I. Kings. Chapter VI. Verse. 11.12.13.14.

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A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

" Injunction, *(o) not to hold him guiltleſs,* " *but to bring down his hoary Head to the* " *Grave with Blood:* Nor can we con- " ceive for what Reaſon he, who durſt " not attempt to puniſh *Joab* in his Life- " Time, ſhould now upon his Death-Bed, " (a proper Seaſon for Forgiveneſs) re- " commend the dangerous and ungrateful " Taſk to his Son, *(p)* who was but " young, and as yet unſettled on his " Throne.

" OUR bleſſed Saviour lays it down for " a Rule of good *Policy* among Princes, " to keep an Eſtimate of their Forces; " for *(q) what King going to War againſt* " *another King,* ſays he, *ſitteth not firſt* " *down, and conſulteth, whether he be able,* " *with ten Thouſand, to meet him, that* " *cometh againſt him with twenty Thou-* " *ſand?* And therefore, if *David* was " minded to take an Account of the " *military* Men in his Kingdom, where " was the great Offence againſt God? " *David,* who knew himſelf beſt, and " with what Purpoſe he number'd the " People, might perhaps have Reaſon to " ſay, *I have ſinned, (r) I have done* " *wickedly*; but his following Words, " *viz. theſe Sheep, what have they done?* " are a ſad Imputation upon the Divine " Juſtice; for, upon the Preſumption " that they were *innocent,* how could " they, with any Juſtice, be puniſh'd " with a raging Peſtilence, for the Tranſ- " greſſion of their King?

" THE Truth is, there are ſo many " *Contradictions* and *Inconſiſtencies* in this " whole Story, *(s)* that there is no *recon-* " *ciling* it to itſelf. In one Place it is ſaid, " that *(t) God moved* David *to number* " *Iſrael,* and in another, that *(u) Satan* " *provok'd him to it:* But it were highly " *profane* and *blaſphemous* to ſay, that " God conſpir'd with *Satan* in this Act, " on Purpoſe to deſtroy a Multitude of " *innocent* Perſons. In like Manner to " ſay, *(x) that there were in* Iſrael *eight* " *hundred Thouſand valiant Men, that* " *drew the Sword, and in* Judah *five hun-* " *dred Thouſand,* beſides Women and " Children, old Men that were unfit for " War, and two entire Tribes, that were " not numbered, is a Thing incredible. " For, *(y)* if in a Nation, the Men, that " are able to bear Arms, are generally " accounted the *fifth* Part of it, the Sum " total of the *ten Tribes* only, that were " number'd, will amount to above ſix " Millions, which (together with the " Tribes unnumber'd) will make up a " Multitude, too large for ſo ſmall a " Country, as that of *Canaan,* to main- " tain.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

" WHAT the Conſtitution of the " *Jewiſh* Monarchy was, it is difficult to " ſay: Kings, from the firſt, might have " the *Right* of nominating their Succeſſors; " but certainly *David* would never have " poſtpon'd his eldeſt Son *Adonijah,* had " he not been in his *Dotage,* and there- " fore influenc'd by his Wife to chuſe her " Son *Solomon:* But after all, what great " Offence had *Adonijah* done, in deſiring " *Abiſhag* for his Wife? Or how does it " appear, that, by ſolliciting this *Alliance,* " he affected to ſupplant *Solomon* of the " Kingdom? To have put him under " ſome civil Reſtraint might have been " excuſable, but to take away his Life " upon that Account, without any regular " *Proceſs,* or *Licenſe* given him to make " his Defence, was, to the laſt Degree, *ar-* " *bitrary* and *tyrannical.* Eſpecially, con- " ſidering that himſelf was never known " to ſet any Bounds to his Love, and, in " marrying of *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, had " trampled upon a Law, which oblig'd the " King as well as the People, *(z) to make* " *no Covenant* with Idolatrous Nations, " nor to enter into Marriages with them, " for

(o) 1 Kings ii. 9. *(p) Calmet*'s Commentary. *(q)* Luke xiv. 31. *(r)* 2 Sam xxiv. 17. the Account in 1 *Chron.* xxi. 5. is much higher, for there it is ſaid, that all they of *Iſrael were a Thouſand Thouſand, and an hundred Thouſand Men, that drew the Sword,* and of *Judah, four hundred threeſcore and ten Thouſand.* *(s)* Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, p. 266. *(t)* 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. *(u)* 1 Chron. xxi. 1. *(x)* 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. *(y) Le Clerc* in Locum. *(z)* Exod. xxxiv. 16. and Deut. vii. 3, 4.

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſt. 1023, &c.

" for fear that *their Daughters* ſhould " draw them aſide, *to go a whoring after* " *their Gods*, whereof himſelf was a no- " torious Inſtance.

" What the *Conſtitution* of the *Jewiſh* " Church was, and how far *ſubordinate* " to the *civil* Power, 'tis no eaſy Matter " to determine; but *Solomon* ſeems to have " tranſcended his Authority, when *(a) he* " *thruſt out* Abiathar *from being Prieſt* " *unto the Lord*, merely for adviſing " *Adonijah* to marry the late King's *Con-* " *cubine*. But well might the Writer of " his Life extend the *Royal Prerogative* " beyond its juſt Bounds, when we find " him ſo very laviſh in his Account of " other Matters, as quite to tranſcend all " Poſſibility of Truth. For what ſhall we " ſay to his making *Solomon* hold a long " Conference with God in his Sleep; and " repreſenting *that* as a Divine Revelation, " which was only the Reſult of an idle " Dream? What ſhall we ſay to the " *Thouſand (b) Burnt-Offerings*, which he " makes him ſacrifice at *Gibeon*, and all on " one Altar only, that was of no larger *(c)* " *Dimenſions*, than *five Cubits ſquare?* To " the *forty Thouſand Stalls* (ſome Inter- " preters make them ſo many *Stables)* for " *Horſes*, which he gives him; and yet " his *Horſe-Men* were no more than " *twelve Thouſand*; and to *(d)* the *fourteen* " *hundred Chariots of War* which he " informs us he kept, when ſome of the " greateſt Princes in After-Ages had not " half that Number, and God's general " Injunction to the King of *Iſrael* was, " *(e)* that he *ſhould not multiply Horſes to* " *himſelf?*

" These are ſome of the Faults and " Failings (to give them the ſofteſt Term " we can) of *David* and his Son *Solomon*, " whom the ſacred Hiſtorian endeavours " to extol, tho' it be at the Expence " of ſome *Abſurdities*, and *Self-Contra-* " *dictions*. The moſt remarkable Part of " their Story is, their Concern for the " Building of the *Temple* at *Jeruſalem*; " and yet it is very juſtly to be queſtion'd, " whether in this they deſerv'd any Praiſe, " or did God any real Service, ſince *(f)* " *the moſt High dwelleth not in Temples* " *made with Hands*, as the *Apoſtle* teſtifies; " for *(g) the Heaven is my Throne, and* " *the Earth is my Foot-Stool*, ſaith the " Lord, *where then is the Houſe which ye* " *build for me, or where is the Place of my* " *Reſt?*"

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

There is hardly any one Paſſage in Scripture more difficult to give a ſatisfactory Account of, than this Relation of *Saul*'s Cruelty to the *Gibeonites*; becauſe we have little or no Intimation, either *when*, or *where*, or *why*, their Slaughter was committed.

Anſwered by ſhewing the Occaſion of Saul's *murthering the* Gibeonites.

The *Gibeonites* were not of the *Children of* Iſrael, but the Remains of the *Amorites*, who, upon *Joſhua*'s taking Poſſeſſion of the *promis'd* Land, impos'd upon him and his Counſellors, and cunningly drew the *Iſraelites* into a League with them, which was inſtantly confirm'd by an Oath; and, becauſe it was ſo confirm'd, for above three hundred Years, was reputed inviolable. But tho' the *Gibeonites*, by their Craft and Fallacy, ſav'd their Lives, yet it was upon this Condition that they ſhould *(h) become Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water* for the Service *of the Tabernacle*. Now while the *Tabernacle* was at *Nob*, which *was a City of the Prieſts*, and where ſome of the *Gibeonites*, their Attendants, may be ſuppos'd to reſide, the ſacred Hiſtory informs us, that *Saul*, *(i)* in Revenge to the Prieſts whom he took to be Favourers of *David*'s Cauſe, deſtroy'd the City, and maſſacred all the Inhabitants thereof; ſo that ſeveral of the *Gibeonites* muſt have been ſlain upon this Occaſion, and for the ſhedding of their Blood this *Famine* was ſent. This is the Account which ſome learned Men give us of the Matter: But they never conſider'd, *(k)* that as *Saul*'s Sin,

(a) 1 Kings ii. 27. *(b)* Ibid. iii. 4. *(c)* *Patrick* in Locum. *(d)* Vid. 1 Kings iv. 26. and 2 Chron. ix. 25. *(e)* Deut. xvii. 16. *(f)* Acts vii. 48. *(g)* Iſaiah lxvi. 1. *(h)* Joſh. ix. 23. *(i)* 1 Sam. xxii. 17. *(k)* *Le Clerc*'s Commentary on 2 Sam. xxi. 1.

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Sin, in murthering the *Prieſts*, was greater, than in ſlaying the *Gibeonites*, God ſhould have inflicted this ſevere Puniſhment upon the Land for the *greater* Sin, rather than the *leſs*. It has been ſaid indeed, that for the Slaughter of the Prieſts, God had aveng'd himſelf on *Saul* before, by ſuffering him and his Sons to be ſlain in Battle by the *Philiſtines*, but that the Slaughter of the *Gibeonites* was not as yet expiated; yet it will be difficult to conceive, why there ſhould be two different and diſtinct Puniſhments for one and the ſame Sin committed at the ſelf-ſame Time.

WHEN, or by whom, or on what Occaſion, the *Tabernacle* and *Altar* of Burnt-Offerings, which were made by *Moſes* in the *Wilderneſs*, were remov'd from *Nob* to *Gibeon* we cannot tell, becauſe the Scripture is ſilent: But 'tis the Conjecture of *(l)* ſome learned Men, that it was not long after the Murder of the *Prieſts* at *Nob*, and that *Saul*, very probably, to regain the Favour of the People, which he found he had loſt by being ſo barbarous to Men of their ſacred Character, quarrell'd with the *Gibeonites*, and baniſh'd them out of their City, in order to make room for the *Tabernacle of the Lord*.

THE Scripture indeed acquaints us, that *(m) he ſought to ſlay the* Gibeonites *in his Zeal to the Children of* Iſrael *and* Judah; where the Expreſſion ſeems to denote, *(n)* that the Children of *Iſrael* envied theſe miſerable People, inſomuch that *Saul* thought he could not do a more popular Act, than to cut them off.

BUT by the *Children of* Iſrael, *(o)* ſome rather underſtand the Tribe of *Benjamin* in particular, *viz.* that very Tribe from whence King *Saul* deſcended, and thence they infer, that his *Zeal*, or earneſt Deſire to promote his own Tribe to Riches and Grandeur, made him ſeek Occaſion to fall foul upon the *Gibeonites*, in order that the three Cities, which they poſſeſs'd in the Territories of *Benjamin*, might fall into his Hands, and ſo be divided among his own Family. That he either had, or intended to advance and enrich his own Tribe, is manifeſt from theſe Words of his: *(p) Hear now, ye Benjamites, will the Son of* Jeſſe *give every one of you Fields and Vineyards, and make you all Captains of Thouſands, and Captains of Hundreds*; i. e. will he do for you, as I have, and mean to do? Now, if we look into the Actions of *Saul*, we do not find, that he made any Purchaſe of the Poſſeſſions of another Tribe, or, that he took from his Enemies any conſiderable Territories, in order to accommodate his *Benjamites*, and are therefore left to ſuppoſe, that the *Fields* and *Vineyards*, wherewith he enrich'd them, he unjuſtly acquir'd by deſtroying and diſpoſſeſſing the *Gibeonites*. 'Tis but ſuppoſing then, that ſome of the *chief* of theſe *Gibeonites* had, in ſome Inſtance or other, offended *Saul*, for which he was minded to deſtroy the whole Race; or, that he had caſt a greedy Eye upon their Lands and Poſſeſſions, which, in caſe of their *Exciſion*, would be forfeited to the *Crown*, and ſo might be given to his own Family; and then he had *Allegations* plauſible enough againſt them, pretending, "That it was not for the Ho-
"nour or Intereſt of God's People, to
"nouriſh any of that *viperous* Brood in
"their Boſoms; and that, however *Joſhua*
"and the *Princes*, who then bore Sway,
"had by their Fraud been drawn into a
"Oath to preſerve them, yet, in Truth,
"that Oath was contrary to God's Com-
"mand, which requir'd them *(q) to*
"*ſmite them, and utterly deſtroy them*, and
"therefore ought not, as he thought, to
"be obſerv'd."

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THUS *Saul* might ſet up for a Reſtorer of the Divine Laws to their antient Rigour, and Strictneſs of *Execution*, and a Supplier of the Default of *Joſhua*, and the Princes of *Iſrael*, in ſparing the *Gibeonites*, even tho' they were compris'd in the general *Ordinance* of Extirpation; and, under

How the Iſraelites *might become* culpable.

(l) Calmet's Commentary on 1 Sam. xxii. 19. *(m)* 2 Sam. xxi. 2. *(n) Le Clerc* in Locum. *(o)* The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III. *(p)* 1 Sam. xxii. 7. *(q)* Deut. vii. 2.

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this Character, he might eaſily draw in his own Subjects to abet, and aſſiſt his Cruelty againſt a poor People, for whom they had never any good Liking. *Regis ad exemplum* is the known *Maxim*, and therefore we may eaſily ſuppoſe, that a wicked and hard-hearted People, who had aſſiſted *Saul* in the Perſecution of *David*; had adher'd to *Abſalom* in his *Rebellion* againſt his own Father; and who, at the Beck of ſo many impious Princes, left the true Worſhip of God, and fell into Idolatry; would not be backward to aſſiſt *Saul*, in putting in Execution any of his Contrivances againſt the poor *Gibeonites*. And if ſo, we cannot but admire the Wiſdom and Juſtice of God, in making the Puniſhment *national*, when the *whole Nation* (for aught we know) was confederate with *Saul* in murdering the *Gibeonites*, or guilty at leaſt in not hindering it; when the *next Generation* was involv'd in the Guilt, by not repairing the Injury as much as poſſible, or not expreſſing their Horrow and Deteſtation of it by ſome *publick* Act; when an Act of Diſcipline might, at this Time, be neceſſary, to preſerve the remaining *Gibeonites* from Inſults, to beget in the *Iſraelites* a proper Reſpect for them, to prevent the like Murders for the future, and the like Breaches of *national* Compacts.

And God might juſtly puniſh them.

Nay, ſuppoſing the People, who liv'd in that Time, when the Famine prevail'd, to be never ſo *innocent* of the Blood of the *Gibeonites*, yet it cannot be denied, but that God (who is the Author and Giver of Life) has an abſolute Right over the Lives of all, and can recall that Gift, whenever he pleaſes: And *(r)* therefore, if, in the Caſe before us, he made a Demand (as certainly he had a Right to do it) of ſo many Lives at ſuch a Time, and in ſuch a Manner, as might beſt anſwer the Ends of *Diſcipline*; then, that which was *juſt* in other Views, and without any ſuch ſpecial Reaſon, could not become *unjuſt*, by having that *additional* Reaſon to recommend it. In a Word, if the Thing was righteous, conſider'd merely as *an Act of Dominion* in God, it could not but be both righteous and kind, by being made, at the ſame Time, an *Act of Diſcipline* for the Puniſhment of Sin and Perfidy, and the Promotion of Juſtneſs and Godlineſs among Men. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

How Saul's Sons and Grandſons might be culpable.

We muſt all allow, that God, as he is a moſt juſt and righteous Being, can never require, that the *Innocent* ſhould die for the *Guilty*; and therefore we have Reaſon to believe, that, when *Saul* (for Reaſons above-mention'd) was ſo outrageous againſt the *Gibeonites*, his Sons, and Grandſons, might be the Inſtruments of his Cruelty, and very probably bear ſome Part in the *military* Execution. For it frequently ſo happens, that whatever a King commands, be it never ſo abominable, is generally approv'd, and executed by his Family; and therefore, *(s)* when we are told, from the Mouth of God, that the Plague, ſent upon the People, was *for* Saul, *and his bloody Houſe, becauſe* † *he ſlew the* Gibeonites; it ſeems to be evident, that it was for their Guilt, as well at his; nor can we imagine, that this Guilt of theirs could be any Thing leſs, than that of being the Executioners in this Slaughter. 'Tis plain, that they were his *Captains of Thouſands, and Captains of Hundreds*; and it is as plain, that, as ſuch, they muſt be the Inſtruments of his Cruelty; for, if they were not, why are they call'd *bloody?* They refus'd indeed *(t)* to ſlaughter the *Prieſts* at his Command, but there is no Reaſon to believe, that they were ſo ſcrupulous in Regard to the *Gebeonites*; and if they were not, is there leſs Equity, in God's deſtroying their Sons for the Sins of their Fathers, which they adopted and ſhar'd in, than there was in his deſtroying *Jehoram*, the Son of *Ahab*, for that Vineyard, which the Father had cruelly and unjuſtly acquir'd, and Son as unjuſtly detain'd?

Without

(r) Scripture Vindicated, Part ii.

† The Words, which we render *he ſlew*, might as properly be render'd *they ſlew*.

(s) The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III. *(t)* 1 Sam. xxii. 17.

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

WITHOUT calling then to our Aſſiſtance God's great Prerogative, *(u) of viſiting the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation*, we may fairly ſay, that, if theſe Deſcendants of *Saul* did either concur in this Murder of the *Gibeonites*, when *doing*, or avow and defend it when *done*, they became culpable upon their own, as well as their Anceſtors Account, and thereupon juſtly deſerv'd to be deliver'd up to the Reſentment of a People, that had ſuffer'd ſo much by their *Inhumanity*.

Why God delay'd their Puniſhment ſo long.

UPON this Suppoſition then, (for it is by Suppoſitions that we muſt go in this obſcure Part of Hiſtory) that both the *People* and the *Princes of the Blood* were *acceſſary*, or *inſtrumental* to *Saul*'s Cruelty, the Reaſon why God delay'd their Puniſhment ſo long is obvious; even becauſe his infinite Goodneſs waited for their Repentance, which *Goodneſs* we badly requite, if we pervert it as an Argument againſt his *Providence*. For may not God be gracious and merciful as long as he pleaſes? Or have we any Right to ſet bounds to his Patience and Long-ſuffering? 'Tis but ſuppoſing then, that, while God continu'd in this State of Expectance, upon ſome ſpecial Occaſion or other, to us unknown, both the People of *Iſrael* and *Saul*'s Poſterity might diſcover, that they were ſo far from repenting, that they gloried in the Murder of the *Gibeonites*, and this would determine God, who had hitherto waited for their Penitence in vain, to pour out his Indignation upon them, and exact a ſevere Puniſhment both for their Cruelty and Obſtinacy.

The Gibeonites *ſuperſtitious Notions.*

WHETHER the *Gibeonites* did right or wrong in exacting ſo ſevere a *Retaliation*, as that of hanging up ſeven of *Saul*'s Progeny, for the Injury that he and his Family had done them, the ſacred Hiſtory is no ways concern'd. It relates the Tranſaction juſt as it happen'd; but, to ſhew us from whence this *barbarous* Cuſtom of *hanging up Men* to appeaſe the Anger of the Gods did proceed, it *prefaces* the Account of the Matter, with this Obſervation:——*(x) Theſe* Gibeonites *were not of the Children of* Iſrael, (for among them they learnt no ſuch Practice) *but a Remnant of the* Amorites, who were addicted to this horrid *Superſtition*, of which the *Gibeonites* (notwithſtanding their Abode among People of better Sentiments) ſtill retain'd ſome Tincture, and propounded it to *David*, as an *Expedient* to make the Earth become fruitful again: *(y) Let ſeven of* Saul's *Sons be given unto us, and we will hang them up unto the Lord.*

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

The Reaſons of God's exacting this Puniſhment.

THE Scripture, you ſee, ſpeaks in the *Dialect* of theſe People; but from thence we make a wrong Concluſion, if we think, that God can be delighted with *human Sacrifices*, which ſo frequently, and ſo vehemently we find him declaiming againſt, and profeſſing his utter Deteſtation of. He deſires the Death, or Puniſhment of no Man, except it be in Purſuance of the Ends of his wiſe Providence, or when the *Criminal*, by his bad Conduct, has forfeited his Life to the *Government*, he lives under; nor would he have requir'd the Execution of any of *Saul*'s Poſterity, had it not been to procure the poor diſtreſs'd *Gibeonites* (who were true Drudges to their *Hebrew* Maſters) a kinder Treatment and better Quarter for the future; had it not been to teſtify his Abhorrence of all Oppreſſion and Violence; to ſhew, that the Cries of the meaneſt *Slave*, as well as of the *mightieſt* Monarch *enter the Ears* of the moſt High; that with him there is no Reſpect of Perſons, but *the Rich and the Poor to him are both alike: (z)* Had it not been, to repair the Injury done to his moſt holy Name, in the Violation of the Compact, which both *Joſhua* and the Princes of *Iſrael* made with this People, and confirm'd with the Solemnity of an *Oath:* Had it not been

(u) Exod. xx. 5. *(x)* 2 Sam. xxi. 2. *(y)* Ibid. ver. 6. *(z)* *Calmet*'s Commentary in Locum.

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been by this exemplary Puniſhment, to give Mankind a Leſſon of Inſtruction, concerning the *Sacredneſs* of *Oaths* and *Treaties*, and how religiouſly they ought to be obſerv'd, even towards thoſe, that are in the loweſt State and Circumſtances of Life.

Under theſe Conſiderations only could the Death of *Saul*'s Sons be acceptable to God; and how far *David*, in like Manner, came to be concern'd in it, we ſhall now proceed to conſider.

That David *had no Deſign to deſtroy* Saul's *Family.*

Both the *Septuagint* and *vulgar Latin* Tranſlation make the Demand of the *Gibeonites*, when *David* ſent to offer them Satisfaction, run in this Strain:——*(a) The Man, who conſumed us, and oppreſſed us unjuſtly, we ought utterly to deſtroy, ſo as not to leave one of his Race remaining in any of the Coaſts of* Iſrael; and in this Demand, we may preſume, that they perſiſted, until *David*, partly by his Authority, and partly by kind Intreaties, prevail'd with them to be content with *ſeven* only. Here then was a fair Opportunity for *David* (had he been ſo minded) to have cut off the whole Race of *Saul* as it were at one Blow, and to have avoided all the Odium of the Action, by but barely ſaying, "That the *Gibeonites* demanded *all*, and "his Inſtructions from *God* were, to "grant whatever they demanded." But, inſtead of that, we find him, before this happen'd, making Enquiry for ſuch *(b) as were left of* Saul's *Family, that he might ſhew Kindneſs to them for* Jonathan's *Sake*; interpoſing his good Offices here with the *Gibeonites* to have them abate the *Keeneſs* of their Reſentment, and make the Slaughter of *Saul*'s *devoted* Houſe as moderate as poſſible; and, after that Slaughter was over, *(c)* giving them a publick and ſolemn Interment, *with the Bones of* Saul *and* Jonathan *his Son*, in the Sepulchre of their Anceſtors, and himſelf attending them in Perſon to the Grave.

The Death of *Saul*'s Poſterity, procur'd by the *Gibeonites*, had it not proceeded from God's poſitive Command, but been only a *plauſible Pretence for* David *to get rid of his Rivals in Empire, (d)* we cannot imagine why he ſhould ſlay no more than *ſeven* of theſe Deſcendants; why he ſhould cut off only *collateral* Branches, and ſpare all thoſe, who were in a direct Line of Succeſſion to the Throne; why he ſpar'd *Iſhboſheth*, his Competitor for the Kingdom, whom, by *Abner*'s Means, he might have diſpatch'd, and, according to their Deſert, puniſh'd the two Traitors, who had officiouſly murther'd him; and why he ſpar'd *Mephiboſheth* the Son of *Jonathan*, and *Micah* his Son, and *Micah*'s four Sons, (whom in all Probability he liv'd to ſee) and in them *(e)* a long Generation, all deſcended from *Saul*'s Family, and all related to the Crown. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

Had this Affair of the *Gibeonites* happen'd indeed about the Beginning of *David*'s Reign over all *Iſrael*, ſoon after the Death of *Iſhboſheth*, and when he had Reaſon to apprehend, that ſome other *Rival* might, perchance, ſpring up in his Stead; there might then be ſome Umbrage to think, that the Branches of *Saul*'s Family were to be cut off for *Reaſons of State*, and to make his Poſſeſſion of the Crown more ſafe: But, ſince theſe Things came to paſs very near the *Concluſion* of his Reign, when (as he himſelf acknowledges *(f)* in the very next Chapter) God had not only *covered him with the Shield of his Salvation, and ſo enlarged his Steps under him, that his Feet could not ſlip, but given him likewiſe the Necks of his Enemies, and made him the Head over many ſtrange Nations*; he could have no juſt Conception of Danger from any Quarter, and conſequently, no Neceſſity to eſtabliſh his Throne by Blood.

But was compelled to deliver them.

It could not be then for any private End, that *David* deliver'd theſe Children of *Saul* into the Hands of the *Gibeonites*, but purely in Obedience to the Will of God, who hath both directed, and warranted

(a) 2 Sam. xxi. 5. *(b)* Ibid. ix. 1. *(c)* Ibid. xxi. 12, 13. *(d)* The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III. *(e)* Vide 1 Chron. viii. 33, &c. *(f)* 2 Sam. xxii. 36, &c.

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ranted him ſo to do. For we cannot but ſuppoſe, (as *Joſephus* does) that, when *David* conſulted the Oracle concerning the *Famine*, God inform'd him, not only for what Crime it was inflicted, but by what Means likewiſe it was to be remov'd: And therefore, being let into all this, he was not at Liberty to do what he pleas'd, but compell'd rather to give up the Children as ſo many *Victims*, notwithſtanding his *Promiſe* and *Oath* to their Father; becauſe a *ſuperior* Power interpos'd, and, in ſo doing, cancell'd the *prior* Obligation.

His granting away Mephibosheth's *Eſtate accounted for.*

HIS making a Grant of *Mephiboſheth*'s Eſtate to a vile Miſcreant of a Servant, without giving his Maſter a fair Hearing, is another Exception, that is commonly made to the Juſtice of King *David*'s Proceedings in this Period of Time. But how could *David* have Leiſure to ſend for *Mephiboſheth* from Mount *Olivet* to *Jeruſalem*, and enquire into the Merits of the Cauſe depending between him and his Servant, when he was in ſo great an Hurry, and under Flight from the Arms of his rebel Son? Or how could he ſuppoſe that *Ziba* could have dar'd to have told him ſo notorious a Lye, when it might, in a ſhort Time, be diſprov'd? Every Circumſtance, in ſhort, on *Ziba*'s Side, look'd well; but none on his Maſter's. To his Maſter, *David* had been extremely kind in reſtoring to him the forfeited Eſtate of his Grand-Father *Saul*, and in allowing him *(g) to eat at his own Table, as one of the King's Sons*; and now, at the general *Rendezvous* of his Friends, *David* might well have expected, that the Perſon, to whom he had extended ſo many Favours, ſhould not have been ſo negligent of his Duty, as to abſent himſelf, unleſs it had been upon ſome extraordinary Buſineſs: And therefore, when *Ziba* acquaints him with the Occaſion of his Abſence, tho' it was a mere Fiction, yet with *David* it might find a readier Credence, becauſe at this Time he had Reaſon to miſtruſt every Body, and ſeeing his own Family diſconcerted and broken, might think the Crown liable to fall to any new *Claimant*, that could pretend to the ſame Right of Succeſſion, that *Mephiboſheth* might. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

ON the contrary, every Thing appear'd bright and plauſible on *Ziba*'s Side. He, tho' but a Servant, came to join the King, and inſtead of adhering to his Maſter's pretended Schemes of Advancement, had expreſs'd his Duty to his rightful Sovereign, in bringing him a conſiderable *Preſent*, enough to engage his good Opinion. The *Story* that he told of his Maſter likewiſe, tho' utterly falſe, was cunningly contriv'd, and fitly accommodated to the Nature of the Times: So that, in this Situation of Affairs, as wiſe a Man, as *David*, might have been induc'd to believe the whole to be true, and, upon the Preſumption of its being ſo, might have proceeded to paſs a Judgment of *Forfeiture* (as in moſt *Eaſtern* Countries every Crime againſt the *State* was always attended with ſuch a *Forfeiture*) upon *Mephiboſheth*'s Eſtate, and to conſign the Poſſeſſion of it to another.

ALL therefore, that *David* can be blam'd for in this whole Tranſaction, is an Error in Judgment, even when he was impos'd upon by the plauſible Tale of a *Sycophant*, and had no Opportunity of coming at the Truth; but upon his Return to *Jeruſalem*, when *Mephiboſheth* appears before him, and pleads his own Cauſe, we find this the Deciſion of it:——*(h) Why ſpeakeſt thou any more of thy Matters? I have ſaid, thou and* Ziba *divide the Land:* Which Words muſt not be ſo underſtood, as if he appointed, at that Time, an equal Diviſion of the Eſtate, between *Mephiboſheth* and his Servant, (for where would the Juſtice of ſuch a Sentence be?) but rather, that he revok'd the Order he had given to *Ziba*, upon the ſuppos'd Forfeiture of his Maſter, and put Things now upon the ſame Eſtabliſhment they were at firſt. *(i) I have ſaid*, i. e. "My firſt "Grant ſhall ſtand, when I decreed, that "*Mephiboſheth* ſhould be Lord of the "whole

(g) 2 Sam. ix. 11. *(h)* Ibid. xix. 29. *(i)* *Selden*, de Succeſſionibus 25.

A. M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

" whole Eſtate, and *Ziba* his Steward to " manage it for him."

The Words of the Grant are theſe,—— *(k) Then the King called to* Ziba Saul's *Servant, and ſaid unto him, I have given unto thy Maſter's Son all that pertained to* Saul *and to all his Houſe. Thou therefore and thy Sons, and thy Servants, ſhall till the Land for him, and thou ſhalt bring in the Fruits, that thy Maſter's Son may have Food to eat,* i. e. may be enabled to maintain himſelf and Family in Plenty; *but* Mephiboſheth, *thy Maſter's Son, ſhall eat Bread alway at my Table.* From whence it ſeems manifeſt, that this *Ziba* had been an old Steward in *Saul*'s Family, and had manag'd his private Eſtate, which lay at *Gibeah* of *Benjamin*. *(l)* This Eſtate upon one Account or other had come into *David*'s Poſſeſſion, either in Right of his Wife, upon the Death of *Saul*'s Son, or by *Forfeiture* to the Crown, upon *Iſhboſheth*'s Rebellion; but he, being willing now to do a generous Act to *Saul*'s Family, in Memory of his Friendſhip to *Jonathan*, paſs'd a free Grant or Dedition of it to his Son, and (that he might make a Proviſion for all his Dependents at once) put *Ziba* into the ſame Place he had enjoy'd before, conſtituting him † Steward of the royal Manour of *Gibeah*, even as he had been in the Life of *Saul*. So that *David*'s Sentence or Determination, *(m) thou and* Ziba *divide the Land*, refers us to this *original* Grant, and conſequently implies no more, than that all Things ſhould be in the ſame Situation, they were in before; *viz.* That *Ziba* and his Sons ſhould manage the Eſtate, and ſupport themſelves out of it, as uſual, and that the Remainder of the Profits, which accru'd from thence, they ſhould bring to *Mephiboſheth*, for him to diſpoſe of as he pleas'd; and to this Senſe of the Words the following Reply ſeems to be accommodated, *yea let him have all,* viz. to his own Uſe and Property, *ſince my Lord the King is come again in Peace.* From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

His Conduct towards Shimei *and* Joab *vindicated.*

That, which leads many into a *Miſconception* of *David*, as if he left the World in a vindictive and *unforgiving Temper*, (becauſe we find him giving his Son ſome Inſtructions concerning two Perſons, who had groſsly miſ-behav'd towards him) has been nothing elſe, but the Want of diſtinguiſhing between the ſame Perſon, when acting or adviſing in a *publick*, and when in a *private* Capacity. *Shimei* curſes *David* in the Time of his Troubles; and yet *David* forgives him, and promiſes he ſhall not die. *Joab* does many valourous and brave Acts for the Honour of his King, and the Enlargement of his Dominions, but then he ſullies all with his *inſolent* Behaviour, and barbarous *Murthers*. They both had committed Crimes enough to forfeit their Lives; *David* however, for *Reaſons of State*, thought it not adviſeable to ſeize either of them for the preſent, but directed his Son, if ever they ſhould give him a ſufficient Provocation, not to ſpare them. " *Thou haſt* Shimei *with thee (n)* " and ſome Share perhaps he may have " in thy Favour; but truſt him not, he " is no Friend to Kings, or kingly Power. " Remember what he did to me in my " Diſtreſs; how bitterly, how virulently " he curs'd me to my Face; and I make " no Doubt, but that he would be the " ſame to thee in the like Circumſtances. " I forgave him in my *Exile*, becauſe I " look'd upon him, as an Inſtrument in " God's Hands to humble me for my great " Offence. I forgave him in my Return " home, becauſe he came to me when my " Heart was open, and unwilling to damp " the Joy of my Reſtoration with the Ef- " fuſion of any Blood. I promis'd him " his Life; and let not that Promiſe be violated

(k) 2 Sam. ix. 10, 11. *(l) Pool*'s Annotations in Locum.

† The ancient Way of Tenancy (nor is it yet quite diſus'd) was that of occupying the Land, and giving the Proprietor a certain annual Portion of the Fruits of it. When the Tenant paid one Half of the annual Produce, he was called *Colonus Partiarius*; and ſuch, in the Judgment of the beſt Criticks, was *Ziba* to *Mephiboſheth*, as he had been before to *Saul*. The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. III.

(m) 2 Sam. xix. 29, 30. *(n) Patrick*'s Commentary, on 2 Kings ii. 8.

A M. 2981, &c. Ant. Chriſ. 1023, &c.

" violated in my Days: But what I did is " no Rule, or Obligation to thee. Let him " not die however for his Offence againſt " me, but rather watch his Conduct, and, " if he ſhould chance to give thee a " freſh Occaſion, be ſure to lay hold of it, " becauſe it is not in his Nature to be a " good *Subject*.

" THOU remembereſt likewiſe, what " *Joab* did unto me; with what Inſo- " lence he treated me in the Time of the " War againſt *Abſalom*; how, contrary to " my Orders, he ſlew him, and after- " wards talk'd to me in a *menacing* and " imperious Manner. Thou remembereſt " what he did to *Amaſa*, whom I intend- " ed to have put in his Place, and made " the *General* of all my Forces; and what " to *Abner*, who was then endeavouring " to gain over to my *Party* all that ad- " her'd to the Houſe of *Saul*. The In- " jury done to theſe two brave Men re- " dounds upon me, ſince they were both " under my Protection, and both mur- " der'd, baſely murder'd, becauſe I had " an Eſteem for them; and till Juſtice " be done to their Murderer, (which I " in my Life-time had not Power to " do) *(o) their innocent Blood will not* " *depart from my Houſe*. Do thou there- " fore take Care to *aſſoil* it, and when- " ever he commits any Tranſgreſſion a- " gainſt thee, let the Blood of theſe two " valuable Men be charg'd to his Account, " and let him, as he has long deſerv'd, be " put to Death."

THIS is the Senſe of *David*'s Words to his Son concerning theſe two Men; and it is eaſy to obſerve, that, in theſe dying Inſtructions of his, *(p)* he is not to be conſider'd as a *private Man*, acting upon Principles of Reſentment, but as a King and Governor, giving Advice to his Son and Succeſſor in Affairs of State. It was for the publick Good, that ſuch Offenders, as *Shimei* and *Joab*, ſhould ſuffer at a proper Time, and as Prudence ſhould direct: And therefore, ſince his Promiſe and Oath to one of them, and the formidable Power and Intereſt, which the other had uſurp'd, reſtrain'd him, in his Life-time, from puniſhing them as they deſerv'd; and ſince it would have been an unjuſt Thing in itſelf, and a Derogation to the Glory of his Reign, to ſuffer ſuch publick and crying Sins to go unpuniſh'd; he recommended the Conſideration of theſe Things to his Son, and, *(q)* like a wiſe *Magiſtrate*, laid a *Scheme* for the Puniſhment of Wickedneſs, without Regard to any private Revenge.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

Why he left Solomon *to puniſh them.*

DAVID, as we ſaid, durſt not call *Joab* to an Account, becauſe his Power and Intereſt was ſo great in the Army, (and 'twas the Army, that *David*, in a great Meaſure, depended on) that it might have occaſion'd an Alteration in the Government, had he pretended to do it: But, when *Solomon* came to the Throne, *Joab* was not that mighty Man he had formerly been. He was at leaſt of an equal Age with *David*; had commanded the Armies of *Iſrael* for twenty Years, and upwards; and, as he was only formidable at the Head of his Troops, and in the Times of War and publick Diſorder; ſo *(s)* the profound Peace which had ſubſiſted for ſome Time, both before, and after the Beginning of *Solomon*'s Reign, had impair'd his Power, and made him in a Manner *uſeleſs*. Upon this Account, *Solomon* had not the like Reaſon to fear him, that his Father had; nor did he lie under the like Obligations to ſpare him. He had done *David* great Services indeed, and a ſufficient Recompence it was, that he had been indulg'd, for ſo many Years, with an Impunity for his Crimes; but, whatever the Father might be, the Son was under no Ties or Obligations, eſpecially, when he found him conſpiring to take away his Kingdom, and tranſlate it to another.

David's Sin in numbering the People, what.

WHEREIN the *Formality* of *David's* Sin in numbering the People (which, at firſt

(o) 1 Kings ii. 31.

(p) Scripture vindicated, Part ii. p. 106.

(q) *Calmet*'s and *Le Clerc*'s Commentaries, on 1 Kings ii.

(s) *Calmet*'s Commentary.

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firſt View, ſeems not to be ſo very heinous) did conſiſt, it is not ſo well agreed among Interpreters. *(t) When thou takeſt the Number of the Children of* Iſrael, ſays God to *Moſes*, *after their Number, then ſhall they give every Man a Ranſom for his Soul unto the Lord, that there be no Plague among them, when thou numbereſt them:* Upon which Paſſage *Joſephus*, and ſome others, have founded this Conjecture;—— That *David* had quite forgot to demand of every Man, that was muſter'd, an *half Shekel*, which was appointed by the Law, and is here called a *Ranſom for his Soul*, and therefore God ſent among the People a Peſtilence; becauſe, amidſt the great Plenty and Abundance, which they now enjoy'd, it was a very impious and provoking Thing not to pay him his *Dues*. *(u)* But where do we find, that, upon every Numbering of the People, an *half Shekel* was order'd to be paid? 'Twas in this Caſe only, when the People were to contribute towards the Building of the Tabernacle, and God threatens thoſe that ſhould refuſe to do it; but this has no Manner of Relation to what *David* did, who no where ſtands charg'd with ſuch an Omiſſion, *(x)* any more, than with a Deſign of raiſing a *Capitation-Tax* (as others conceive) upon every *Poll* through the Kingdom.

Others are of Opinion, that this Numbering of the People was a Thing contrary to the fundamental Promiſe, which God made *Abraham*, viz. that his Seed ſhould ſo increaſe, as even to *exceed the Stars* in Multitude; and therefore, ſince God had promis'd to increaſe them beyond Number, it ſavour'd of *Infidelity* and Diſtruſt in God, for any one to go about to number them: But, quite contrary to this, the Scripture, in another Place, tells us, that *David* (out of a religious Regard to the Promiſe of God) never intended to take an exact Number of *all*, but of ſuch only as were fit to bear Arms; for ſo the Words are, *(y) He took not the Number of them, from twenty Years old and under, becauſe the Lord had ſaid, he would increaſe* Iſrael, *like to the Stars of the Heavens.* From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

The moſt common therefore, and indeed the only probable Opinion is, that this Act of *David*'s proceeded *(z)* from Pride and Ambition, and a fooliſh Curioſity to know the Number of his Subjects, the Strength of his Forces, and the Extent of his Empire: As if all theſe had greatly contributed to his Glory and Renown; as if they had been of his own acquiring, and more proper to place his Confidence in, than the Power and Aſſiſtance of him, whoſe Protection he had ſo long experienc'd; whom, upon other Occaſions, he was wont to call *his Rock, his Shield, and Caſtle of Defence*; and who was able, at all Times, to ſave with a *Handful* of Men, as well as a *Multitude*.

Pride then, and an arrogant Conceit of himſelf, (which is always attended with a *Forgetfulneſs* of God) was at the Bottom of *David*'s numbering the People; and indeed ſo viſible to others, as well as to the All-ſeeing Eye of God, that we find *Joab* (who was then of his *Privy-Council)* thus remonſtrating againſt it: *(a) Now the Lord thy God add unto thy People (how many ſoever they be) an hundred Fold, and that the Eyes of my Lord the King may ſee it; but why doth my Lord the King delight in this Thing?*

God not the Cauſe of it.

It is a judicious Obſervation of the Apoſtle, *(b) Let no Man ſay, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot tempt with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man: But every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away with his own Luſt, and enticed*; and therefore it may juſtly be reckon'd a peculiar *Elegance* in the *Hebrew* Tongue, that it frequently leaves out the *Nominative Noun* to a Verb *Active*, which when it happens, the *Accuſative* following ſupplies the Place of the

(t) Exod. xxx. 12. (u) *Calmet*'s Commentary in Locum. (x) *Patrick* in Locum. (y) 1 Chron. xxvii. 23, 24. (z) *Calmet*'s Commentary in Locum. (a) 2 Sam. xxiv. 3. (b) James i. 13, 14.

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the *Nominative*, that is wanting. This ſhews, that our *Tranſlators* have made a groſs Miſtake in rendering the Paſſage, *the Lord moved* David *to number* Iſrael *and* Judah, becauſe in the Original there is no ſuch Thing *as the Lord*; for the *Nominative* is omitted, as I ſaid, and the *Accuſative*, ſupplying its Place, makes the Senſe ſimply *David was moved* (by what is not nam'd, but by his Pride and Vanity, we may ſay, as well as *(c)* the Inſtigations of the Devil) to *number the People*. So that there is no Contradiction in the Scripture-Account of this Tranſaction, no Appearance of a Confederacy between *God* and *Satan*; nor was God any farther concern'd in it, than as his Providence, for wiſe Ends, thought proper to permit it.

Why God ſent the Peſtilence upon the People.

" BUT, if *David* only was culpable in " this Affair, why did not God immedi- " ately puniſh him for it, inſtead of falling " upon the People, who were confeſſedly " *innocent?*"

THE *Generality* perhaps were innocent, as to the Affair of numbering the People: That might be chiefly *David*'s Sin; but, in other Reſpects, they were not. They had many great and grievous Sins, which juſtly deſerv'd Puniſhment, and for which probably they would have been puniſh'd before, had it not been for God's Tenderneſs to *David*, who muſt have been a Sufferer in the common Calamity; but now, when both King and People had deſerv'd Correction, God was pleas'd to let looſe his Anger upon both. *David*, indeed, was not ſmitten in *Perſon*, but a King is never more ſenſibly puniſh'd, than when the Judgment of God falls upon his People, and diminiſhes their Number, and their Strength. For the Body *politick* is not unlike the Body *natural*; no ſooner does the Head ſuffer, but all the Members ſuffer with it; nor can the leaſt Part of the Body be in Pain, but the Head is immediately affected: And therefore we need not doubt, but that *David*, when he ſaw *(d)* the *Angel ſtretching out his Hand upon* Jeruſalem, *to deſtroy it*, and thereupon broke out into this Exclamation, *Let thy Hand, I pray thee, be againſt me, and againſt my Father's Houſe*, had his Heart as full of Grief and Anxiety as any one, that lay languiſhing in the Plague.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THUS, *in all the Afflictions* of his People, *David* was afflicted: And, if this ſore Judgment befel the Nation a little while before *Abſalom*'s Rebellion, (as ſome have ſuſpected a *Miſ-location* in this Part of the Hiſtory) this may ſuggeſt a Reaſon, why God might think fit to preſerve *David*, and not cut him off, as he deſerv'd, for his Sin; *(e)* that the Diſſention, which might have aroſe among his Sons, about the Right of Succeſſion in Caſe of his Death, and the *foreign* and *domeſtick* Wars, that would thereupon have enſu'd, and * prov'd more fatal to the *Iſraelites*, than this deſtroying *Peſtilence*, might, by *David*'s Life, and Interpoſition, be prevented. And from the Senſe of this, very probably it is, that we find him commemorating his Deliverance from this publick Calamity in ſuch exalted Strains, as make it diſputable, whether their *Piety* or *Poetry* are more remarkable. *(f) He that dwelleth in the ſecret Place of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty. He ſhall deliver thee from the Snare of the Fowler, and from the noiſome Peſtilence. Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the Terror by Night, nor for the Arrow that flieth by Day, nor for the Peſtilence that walketh in Darkneſs, or for the Deſtruction that waſteth at Noon-Day. A Thouſand ſhall fall at thy Side, and ten Thouſand at thy Right-Hand, but it ſhall not come nigh thee.*

And not on David.

(c) 1 Chron. xxi. 1. *(d)* 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17. *(e)* *Le Clerc*'s Commentary in Locum.

* The Character, which *Livy* gives us of ſuch Factions and Diſſentions is conceiv'd in theſe Words:——Fuere, eruntque pluribus populis magis exitio, quam bella externa, quam fames, morbive, quæque alia in numinis iras, velut ultima publicorum malorum, vertunt, *Lib. iv.*

(f) Pſal. xci. 1, &c.

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The Difference in the Book of Samuel, *and that of* Chronicles *reconciled.*

It muſt be own'd indeed, that there is a very large Difference, in the Scripture-Accounts of the Number of Men, fit to bear Arms, that were found in *David*'s Dominions: *(g)* In *Samuel* it is ſaid, that they were in *Iſrael eight hundred Thouſand*, and in *Judah five hundred Thouſand*; but in *(h) Chronicles, they of* Iſrael *were a Thouſand thouſand, and an Hundred thouſand, and they of* Judah *four hundred threeſcore and ten Thouſand:* And various have been the Attempts to adjuſt and ſettle this Diſagreement. Some ſuppoſe, that, as *Joab* undertook this Office with no ſmall Reluctancy, and *David*, very probably, might repent of the Thing, before it was fully executed, tho' the *Commiſſioners* might make an exact Review, *(i)* yet they thought proper to lay before the King no more than what the Sum in *Samuel* amounts to; but that the Author of the Book of *Chronicles* might, from ſome of theſe Commiſſioners, receive the compleat Sum, which occaſion'd the Difference.

(k) Others imagine, that this Difference ariſes from the *Legionary Soldiers*, (as they are called) or thoſe Companies of *Militia*, which attended the King's Perſon by Turns, and might make the Number either greater, or leſs, according as they were number'd, or not number'd, in the Account: But this Solution is purely *arbitrary*, and ſuch as has no Foundation in Scripture. It ſuppoſes withal, that the real Number was what is recorded in *Chronicles*, which taken in the ſeveral Articles, that are ſaid to be omitted, ſurpaſſes all Faith.

Since there is then no Poſſibility of reconciling theſe different Computations, the Queſtion is, Which of the two we are to receive: And this, without all Controverſy, muſt be that in *Samuel*, not only becauſe the *Arabick* Tranſlators, in their Verſion of the *Chronicles*, have inſerted it, but becauſe there is nothing exceſſive, or extravagant in the Suppoſition, that, in a fertile and well-cultivated Country of ſixty Leagues in Length, and thirty in Breadth, a Multitude of People, to the Number of ſix or ſeven *Millions*, (which, taking in the other Articles, will be the Sum total) might very comfortably be maintain'd. *(l)* Rather then, than have Recourſe to ſuch *Solutions*, as do but more embarraſs the Matter, we may adventure to ſay, without any Diminution to the Scripture's Authority, that the exceſſive Number in the *Chronicles* was a Miſtake of the Perſon, who, after the Captivity, tranſcrib'd this Part of the ſacred Writ; *Nam non dubito* (ſays *Sulpicius, (m)* in his *Sacred Hiſtory*) *Librariorum potius negligentiâ, præſertim tot jam ſæculis intercedentibus, veritatem fuiſſe corruptam, quàm ut Propheta erraverit.*

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

It muſt be acknowledg'd, that in moſt Nations, where the *regal* Power was at this Time eſtabliſh'd, the Right of Succeſſion was generally *hereditary*, and the eldeſt Son ſeldom (except in Caſes of *Incapacity*) poſtpon'd. This is what *Adonijah* urges to *Bathſheba*; *(n) Thou knoweſt, that the Kingdom was mine* by Right of Primogeniture, *and that all* Iſrael *ſet their Faces on me, that I ſhould reign:* But then, there was this peculiar to the *Jewiſh* Conſtitution, that, as God had been their only King from the Time that they firſt became a Nation, ſo, when they thought fit to have that Form of Government alter'd, he ſtill reſerv'd to himſelf the Right of nominating the Succeſſor, when the Throne became vacant: *(o) When thou art come unto the Land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and ſhall ſay, I will ſet a King over me, like all the Nations, that are about me, thou ſhalt by all Means make him King over thee, whom the Lord thy God ſhall chuſe.* So that, when God had declar'd his Pleaſure concerning the Perſon, that was to ſucceed him, (as he did

Why David *made* Solomon *his Succeſſor.*

(g) 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. (h) 1 Chron. xxi. 5. (i) Ibid. xxvii. 24. (k) Vide *Calmet*'s Commentary on 2 Sam. xxiv. 9. (l) *Le Clerc*'s Commentary in Locum. (m) Lib. ii. 15. (n) 1 Kings ii. 15. (o) Deut. xvii. 14, 15.

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did by the Prophet *Nathan) David* was not at Liberty to make Choice of any other.

WE do not diſpute at all, but that *Bathſheba*, who was his favourite Wife, had a great Aſcendancy over her Huſband; but *Solomon*'s Title was not founded upon her Intereſt and Management with the King, but upon the Ordination and Appointment of God. *(p) Of all my Sons*, ſays *David*, *(for the Lord hath given me many Sons) he hath choſen* Solomon *my Son to ſit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the Lord over* Iſrael; and therefore *Adonijah* himſelf acknowledges, *(q) that it was of the Lord, that the Kingdom was turned about, and become his Brother's.*

NATHAN indeed puts *Bathſheba* upon another Argument, *viz.* the *Sacredneſs* of the King's Oath, in order to prevail with him in Behalf of her Son: *(r) Didſt not thou ſwear unto thy Handmaid, ſaying aſſuredly* Solomon *thy Son ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my Throne?* But at what Time this Promiſe was made, is a Matter of ſome Diſpute. The Generality of *Interpreters* are of Opinion, that, after the Death of the firſt Child, which *David* had by *Bathſheba*, he *comforted* her for her Loſs, and gave her Aſſurance, that, if God ſhould give him another Son by her, he would not fail to make him his Succeſſor. But it is much more probable, that *David* did not make any Declaration of a Promiſe to *Bathſheba*, until God had reveal'd it to him, *(s)* that he ſhould have a Son, diſtinct from what he had already, who ſhould ſucceed him in the Kingdom, and have the Honour of building him a Temple; and, no ſooner was *Solomon* born, but *David* was convinc'd that this was the Child to whom the Promiſes belong'd, by *Nathan*'s being ſent to give him a Name, denoting his being *(t) beloved of the Lord:* And 'twas at this Time, moſt probably, that *David* gave his Mother a Promiſe, confirm'd upon Oath, that, ſince God had ſo manifeſtly declar'd in Favour of the Child, he, for his Part, would do his utmoſt to facilitate his Succeſſion: But, upon the whole, he did not chuſe for himſelf, *(u)* neither was his Declaration to *Bathſheba* previous to *Nathan*'s Information, but rather the Effect, and Conſequence of it.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

BUT even ſuppoſe there had been no divine *Interpoſition* in Favour of *Solomon*, why might not *David*, who had done ſuch ſignal Service in his Reign, nominate his Succeſſor? *(x)* Several great Princes, in moſt Nations, have claim'd this Privilege. Among the *Romans*, *Aurelius* nam'd *Nerva*, and *Nerva* choſe *Trajan*, and ſo did *Auguſtus* appoint his Succeſſor. And, that this was a Prerogative belonging to the Crown of *Iſrael*, and what continu'd with it for ſome Time after *David*, is evident from the Story of his Grandſon *Rehoboam*, *(y)* who, tho' a Prince of no great Merit, took upon him the Authority of nominating his Succeſſor, and, to the Prejudice of his eldeſt Son, made one of his youngeſt King.

That he had a Right to name one.

FAR are we from vindicating *Solomon* in all his Actions, any more than *David* in the Matter of *Uriah*. His Severity to his Brother, for a ſeemingly ſmall Offence, look'd like *Revenge*, and as if he had taken the firſt Opportunity to cut him off, for his former Attempt upon the Kingdom: And yet we cannot but imagine, *(z)* from *Solomon*'s Words to his Mother, *Why doeſt thou aſk* Abiſhag *for* Adonijah? *Aſk for him the Kingdom alſo, for he is mine elder Brother*; that there was ſome farther Conſpiracy againſt him, (tho' not mention'd in holy Writ) whereof he had got Intelligence, and wherein *Joab* and *Abiathar* were engag'd; and that he look'd upon this aſking *Abiſhag* in Marriage as the *Prelude* to it, and the firſt *Overt-Act*, as it were, of their Treaſon. It is certain, that they

Why Solomon *might take away* Adonijah's *Life.*

(p) 1 Chron. xxviii. 5. (q) 1 Kings ii. 15. (r) 1 Kings i. 13. 2 Sam. xii. 24. (s) 1 Chron. xxii. 9, 10. (t) The Name was *Jedidiah*, 2 Sam. xii. 25. (u) *Calmet*'s Commentary in Locum. (x) *Patrick*'s Commentary on 1 Kings i. 20. (y) 2 Chron. xi. 21, 22. (z) 1 Kings ii. 22.

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they thought to impoſe upon the King, as they had done upon his Mother, and carry their Point, without ever diſcovering the malevolent Intent of it.

The Wives of the late King (according to the Cuſtoms of the *Eaſt*) belong'd to his Succeſſor, and were never marry'd to any under a *crown'd* Head. *(a) Abiſhag* was doubtleſs a beautiful Woman, and, by her near Relation to *David*, might have a powerful Intereſt at Court; *Adonijah* might therefore hope, by this Marriage to ſtrengthen his Pretenſions to the Crown, or, at leaſt, to lay the Foundation for ſome future Attempt, upon a proper Opportunity, either if *Solomon* ſhould die, and leave a young Son, not able to conteſt the Point with him, or if, at any Time, he ſhould happen to fall under the People's Diſpleaſure, as his Father had done before him.

This might be *Adonijah*'s Deſign, and *Solomon*, accordingly, might have Information of it: But ſuppoſing that his Brother's Deſign was entirely innocent, yet, ſince his Requeſt (according to the Cuſtoms then prevailing) was confeſſedly bold and preſumptuous, and had in it all the Appearance of Treaſon, *(b)* it was none of *Solomon*'s Buſineſs to make any farther Enquiry about it, or to interpret the Thing in his Brother's Favour. It was ſufficient for him, that the Action was in itſelf *criminal*, and of dangerous Conſequence to the State; for 'tis by their Actions, and not Intentions, that all Offenders muſt be tried.

ADONIJAH indeed, had he liv'd under our *Conſtitution*, would have had a *fair* Hearing before *Conviction*: But we ought to remember, that, in the Kingdoms of the *Eaſt*, the Government was *abſolute*, and the Power of Life or Death entirely in the Prince; ſo that *Solomon*, without the Formality of any Proceſs, could pronounce his Brother dead: And, becauſe he conceiv'd, that in Caſes of this Nature, Delays were dangerous, might ſend immediately, and have him diſpatch'd; tho' we cannot but ſay, that it had been more to his Commendation, had he ſhew'd more *Clemency*, and ſpar'd his Life. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

And, in like Manner, had he not marry'd his *Egyptian* Queen, there might be leſs objected to his Character: For, whatever Augmentation of Power he might promiſe himſelf from that Alliance, *(c)* he certainly ran the Hazard of having his Religion corrupted by this unlawful Mixture. Others however have obſerv'd, that, as the ſacred Scriptures commend the Beginning of *Solomon*'s Reign, in all other Reſpects, except the *(d) People's ſacrificing in high Places*, which might be the rather tolerated, *becauſe there was no Houſe built unto the Name of the Lord, in thoſe Days*; and, as they give him this Character, *(e)* that *he loved the Lord, and walked in all the Statutes of* David *his Father*, he would never have done an Act ſo directly contrary to the Laws of God, as marrying an *idolatrous* Princeſs, had ſhe not been firſt *proſelyted* to the *Jewiſh* Faith. The Scripture indeed takes Notice of the Gods of the *Moabites*, *Ammonites*, and *Zidonians*, for whom *Solomon*, in Compliance to his *ſtrange Wives*, built Places of Worſhip: But, as there is no Mention made of any Gods of the *Egyptians*, it ſeems very likely, that this Princeſs, when ſhe was eſpous'd to *Solomon*, quitted the Religion of her *Anceſtors*, to which theſe Words in the *Pſalm*, ſuppos'd to be written upon this Occaſion, *(f) Hearken, O my Daughter, forget thine own People, and thy Father's Houſe, ſo ſhall the King have Pleaſure in thy Beauty, for he is the Lord*, are thought by ſome to be no diſtant *Alluſion*. However this be, it is certain, that we find *Solomon* no where reprov'd in Scripture for this *Match*; *(g)* nor can we think, that his Book of *Canticles* (which is ſuppos'd to be his *Epithalamium*) would have found *Marry an Egyptian Queen.*

(a) *Pool*'s Annotations on 1 Kings ii. 22. (b) *Calmet*'s Commentary in Locum. (c) Vid. 1 Kings xi. (d) 1 Kings iii. 2. (e) Ibid. ver. 3. (f) Pſal. xlv. 10, 11. (g) *Calmet*'s Commentary on 1 Kings iii. 1.

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found a Place in the ſacred *Canon*, had the *Spouſe*, whom it all along celebrates, been at that Time an *Idolatreſs*; tho' there is Reaſon to believe, that ſhe afterwards relaps'd into her antient Religion, and contributed, as much as any, to the King's Seduction, and the many great Diſorders, that were in the latter Part of his Reign.

And degrade Abiathar.

How far the High-Prieſt, *Abiathar*, was concern'd in the Plot againſt *Solomon*, the ſacred Hiſtory does not particularly inform us; but ſuch was the Reverence paid to the *ſacerdotal* Character, that *Solomon* would have hardly dar'd to have depos'd ſuch an one from his Office, had not the *Conſtitution* of the Nation authoriz'd him ſo to do. The Kings in the *Eaſt* indeed ſoon found out Ways to make themſelves *abſolute*; but it looks, as if, at the firſt Eſtabliſhment, the King was at the Head of the *Hebrew* Republick, and the High-Prieſt his Subject, and, in all Civil Affairs, ſubmitted to his Correction; *(b)* inſomuch, that when any one abus'd the Power of his Office to the Prejudice of the Commonweal, or endangering the King's Perſon, the King might juſtly deprive him of his Honours and Titles, of his *Temporalities* and Emoluments, and even of Life itſelf. And therefore, when *Abiathar*, by his Conſpiracy, had merited all this, whatever was dependent on the Crown, (as all the Revenues of this Place, as well as the Liberty of officiating in it were dependent) *Solomon* might lawfully take from him; but the *ſacerdotal Character*, which he receiv'd from God, and to which he was anointed, this he could not alienate: And therefore we may obſerve, that after his *Deprivation*, and even when *Zadok* was in Poſſeſſion of his Place, he is nevertheleſs ſtill mention'd *(i)* under the Stile and Title of the *Prieſt*.

THE Truth is, there is a great deal of Difference between depriving a Man of the *Dignity*, and of the *Exerciſe* of his *Function* in ſuch a determinate Place; and between taking from him an *Authority*, that was given him by God, and the *Profits* and Emoluments ariſing from it, which were originally the Gift of the Crown. The *former* of theſe *Solomon* could not do, and the *latter* it is probable he was the rather incited to do, out of Regard to the *Prophecy* of *Samuel*, wherein he foretold *Eli*, (from whom *Abiathar* was deſcended) that he would tranſlate the Prieſthood from his to another Family, as he did in the Perſon of *Zadok*, who was of the Houſe of *Eleazar*, even as *Eli* was of that of *Ithamar*; ſo that, by this Means, the Prieſthood reverted to its antient *Channel*.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

The different Accounts in Kings *and* Chronicles *reconciled.*

IN the Account which we have of *Solomon*'s ſumptuous Manner of Living, *(k)* we read in the Book of *Kings*, that he had *forty Thouſand Stalls of Horſes for his Chariots*; *(l)* but in that of *Chronicles* it is ſaid, that he had no more than *four*; and yet, in *this* ſome will acknowledge no Diſagreement at all. The Author of *Samuel*, *ſay they*, ſpeaks of the *Horſes*, the Author of the *Chronicles*, of the *Stalls* or *Stables*, which, ſuppoſing every one to contain *ten* Horſes, anſwer the Number exactly. It is obſervable however, that the Hiſtory makes Mention *(m)* of *Chariot-Cities*, i. e. Cities, wherein *Solomon* kept Chariots and Horſemen in ſeveral Parts of his Kingdom, for the Security of his Government, and the Suppreſſion of any Diſorder that might happen to ariſe; and therefore others have thought, that, in the *Chronicles*, the Author ſpeaks of thoſe *Stalls*, which *Solomon* had at *Jeruſalem* for his conſtant *Life-Guard*, and were no more than *four Thouſand*; but in *Kings*, of all thoſe *Stalls*, which were diſpers'd, up and down, in the ſeveral Parts of his Kingdom, which might be forty *Thouſand*: Becauſe, upon the Account of the Conqueſts, which his Father had made on the *Eaſt* Side of *Jordan*, it was neceſſary for *Solomon* to have a ſtronger Armament of this Kind, than other Kings before him had, in order to keep the People, that

(b) *Calmet*'s Commentary on 1 Kings ii. 27. *(i)* 1 Kings iv. 4. *(k)* Ibid. ver. 26. *(l)* 2 Chron. ix. 25. *(m)* Ibid.

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would otherwiſe be apt to rebel, in due Subjection.

But, without any Prejudice to the *Authority* of the Scriptures, why may we not own, that an Error has poſſibly crept into the Text through the Negligence of ſome Tranſcriber, who has inſerted *Arbahim*, i. e. *forty*, inſtead of *Arbah*, *four*, and ſo made this large Diſparity in the Number? *Four Thouſand* Stalls (ſuppoſing each Stall for a ſingle Horſe) are moderate enough, but *forty Thouſand* is incredible: And therefore (to proportion the Horſes to the Chariots, *(n)* which were a *Thouſand* and *four hundred)* we may ſuppoſe, *(o)* with the learned Author, from whom we have borrow'd this Conjecture, that, of theſe Chariots ſome were drawn with two, ſome with three, and ſome with four Horſes. (Now, if the Chariots were each drawn with a *Pair* only, the Number of *Solomon*'s Chariot-horſes muſt be *two Thouſand eight hundred*; if by two Pair, then it muſt be, *five Thouſand ſix hundred*; but the *Medium* between theſe two Numbers is very near *four Thouſand*; and therefore it ſeems moſt likely, that the Horſes, which the King kept for this Uſe only, might be much about this Number. Too many for the Law to *tolerate*, *(p)* but the King perhaps might have as little Regard to this Clauſe in the Law, as he had to the following one, which forbad him *(q) to multiply Wives and* Concubines to *himſelf*, *or greatly to multiply Silver or Gold*.

Solomon's 1000 *Sacrifices on* one *Altar*,

The only remaining Difficulty (except the *divine Viſion* vouchſaf'd *Solomon*, which has not been mention'd) is the great Quantity of Sacrifices, which he is ſaid to have offer'd on one Altar only; but, without recurring to any Miracle for this, or without ſuppoſing, that this Fire, which originally came from Heaven, was more ſtrong and intenſe, than any common Fire, and therefore, after the Return from the Captivity, the Altar (as ſome obſerve) was made larger, becauſe there wanted this celeſtial Flame: Without any forc'd Solution like this, we have no Reaſon to think, that all theſe Sacrifices were offer'd in one Day. The King, (we may imagine) upon one of the great *Feſtivals*, went in Proceſſion with his Nobles, to pay his Devotion at *Gibeon*, where the Tabernacle was, and the brazen Altar, which *Moſes* had made. Each of the great *Feſtivals*, laſted for ſeven Days; but *Solomon* might ſtay much longer at *Gibeon*, until, by the daily Oblations, a thouſand Burnt-offerings were conſum'd; and, at the Concluſion of this Courſe of Devotion, he might offer up his ardent Prayer to God for Wiſdom, and God, for the Confirmation of his Faith, might appear to him in a Dream by Night, and have that Converſe with him, which the Scripture takes notice of.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

And his divine Viſion, *both* probable.

(r) Sleep indeed is like a State of Death to the Soul, wherein the Senſes are lock'd up, and the Underſtanding and Will depriv'd of the free Exerciſe of their Functions; and yet this is no Impediment to God in communicating himſelf to Mankind: For *(s) God ſpeaketh once, yea twice* (ſays the Author of the Book of *Job) in a Dream, in a Viſion of the Night, when deep Sleep falleth upon Men, in Slumberings upon the Bed, then he openeth the Ears of Men, and ſealeth their Inſtruction:* For God, no doubt, has Power, not only to awaken our intellectual Faculties, but to advance them above their ordinary Meaſure of Perception, even while the Body is aſleep.

(t) A very eminent Father of the *Greek* Church, ſpeaking of the different Kinds of Dreams, has juſtly obſerv'd, that the *Organs* of our Body, and our Brain, are not unlike the *Strings* of a *muſical* Inſtrument. While the Strings are ſcrew'd up to a proper Pitch, they give an harmonious Sound, if touch'd by a ſkilful Hand; but,

(n) 1 Kings x. 26. (o) Vid. *Bochart* Hieroſ. P. I. lib. ii. c. 9. (p) Deut. xvii. 16. (q) *Le Clerc*'s Commentary on 1 Kings iv. 26. (r) *Calmet*'s Commentary on 1 Kings iii. (s) Job xxxiii. 14, &c. (t) *Gregory*, de Opificio Hominis, c. 13.

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but, as ſoon as they are relax'd, they give none at all. In like Manner, while we are awake, *(ſays he)* our Senſes, touch'd and directed by our Underſtanding, make an agreeable Concert; but when once we are aſleep, the Inſtrument has done ſounding, unleſs it be, that the Remembrance of what paſs'd, when we are awake, comes and preſents itſelf to the Mind, and ſo forms a *Dream*, juſt as the Strings of an Inſtrument will for ſome Time continue their Sound, even after the Hand of the Artiſt has left them. It is no hard Matter to apply this to *Solomon*'s Dream. He had pray'd the Day before with great Fervency, and deſir'd of God the Gift of Wiſdom. In the Night-time God appear'd to him in a Dream, and bid him aſk whatever he would. *Solomon*, having his Mind ſtill full of the Deſire of Wiſdom, aſk'd it, and obtain'd it: So that the Prayer, or Deſire, which he utter'd in his Dream, was but the Conſequence of the *Option*, he had made the Day before, when he was awake.

IN a Word, tho' we ſhould allow, that the Soul of Man, when the Body is aſleep, is in a State of Reſt and *Inactivity*; yet we cannot but think, that God can approach it many different Ways; can move and actuate it, juſt as he pleaſes; and, when he is minded to make a Diſcovery of any Thing, can ſet ſuch a lively Repreſentation of it before the Eyes of the Man's Underſtanding, as ſhall make him not doubt of the *Reality* of the *Viſion*.

As his Building *of the Temple was* commendable.

SOLOMON indeed, at the Conſecration of the Temple, owns, that *(u) the Heaven of Heavens could not contain God, and much leſs then the Houſe, that he had built him*; but it will not therefore follow, that there is no Neceſſity for Places appropriated to divine Worſhip, nor any Occaſion for making them ſo magnificent and *ſumptuous*. That God, who is the Author and Giver of our Being, and to whom we are indebted for every Thing we have, and every Thing we hope for, ſhould be conſtantly attended with the Homage and Adoration, with the Praiſes and Acknowledgments of his Creatures (his own *dependent* Creatures) is a *Poſition*, that will admit of no Controverſy; and that there ſhould be ſome Places appointed for this Purpoſe, that all the Offices of Religion may be perform'd with more Decency, and more Solemnity, is another *Poſition*, that ſeems to ariſe from the Nature of the Thing. Theſe Buildings we ſtile the *Houſes of God*; but it is not to defend him (as *Arnobius (x)* ſpeaks) from Heat or Cold, from Wind or Rain, or Tempeſts, that we raiſe ſuch Structures, but to put ourſelves in a Capacity of paying our Duty to him, and of nouriſhing in our Hearts ſuch Sentiments of Reſpect and Reverence, of Love and Gratitude, as are due from Creatures to their great Creator.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

IN theſe Places, God is ſaid to be more immediately preſent, to hear our Supplications, receive our Praiſes, and relieve our Wants; and therefore, to make his Habitation commodious, *David* exhorts his Subjects to a liberal *Contribution*, and, *Becauſe I have a Joy*, ſays he, *in the Houſe of my God, I have, of mine own Gold and Silver, given three Thouſand Talents of Gold, even the Gold of* Ophir, *and ſeven Thouſand Talents of fine Silver*. "He indeed makes mention (as "the learned *(y) Hooker*, with whoſe "Words I conclude this Argument, has "obſerv'd) of the natural Conveniency, "that ſuch Kind of bounteous Expen-"ces have, ſince thereby we not only "teſtify our chearful Affection to God, "which thinks nothing too dear to be "beſtow'd about the Furniture of his "Service; but give Teſtimony to the "World likewiſe of his *Almightineſs*, "whom we outwardly honour with the "chiefeſt of outward Things, as being, "of all Things, himſelf incomparably "the greateſt. To ſet forth the Majeſty "of Kings, his *Vicegerents* here below, "the moſt gorgeous and rare Treaſures, "that

(u) 1 Kings viii. 27. *(x)* Contra Gent. lib. vi. *(y)* Eccleſ. Polity, lib. v.

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" that the World can afford, are procur'd; " and can we ſuppoſe, that God will be " pleas'd to accept what the meaneſt of " *theſe* would diſdain? In a Word, tho' " the true Worſhip of God, *ſays he*, be " to God in itſelf acceptable, who reſpects " not ſo much, in what *Place*, as with " what *Affection* he is ſerv'd; yet mani- " feſt it is, that the very Majeſty and " Holineſs of the Place, where God is " worſhipp'd, hath, *in Regard of us*, " great Virtue, Force, and Efficacy, as it " is a ſenſible Help to ſtir up Devotion, " and, in that Reſpect, *bettereth*, no " doubt, our holieſt and beſt Actions of " that Kind."

From 2 Sa xix. to 1 Ki viii.

DISSERTATION V.

Of the antient Jeruſalem, *and its* Temple.

Its Name, and Situation.

IT is an Opinion vulgarly receiv'd, and not without much Probability, that *Jeruſalem* is the ſame City, which *(z)* elſewhere is called *Salem*, and whereof *Melchiſedeck* is ſaid to have been King. Not that *Salem*, or the City of *Melchiſedeck* was of equal Extent with *Jeruſalem* in After-Times; but *Jeruſalem* was no other, than the City of *Salem* enlarg'd and beautify'd by the Kings of all *Iſrael*, at firſt by *David* and *Solomon*, and, after that, by the ſucceeding Kings of *Judah*, when the Monarchy came to be divided into two diſtinct Kingdoms.

THE Word *Salem*, in the *Hebrew* Language, *(a)* ſignifies *Peace:* And, as the City of *Melchiſedeck* called *Salem*, is probably thought to be the ſame with *Jeruſalem*; ſo is it certain, that *Jeruſalem* was *(b)* otherwiſe called *Jebus*, and therefore, as it preſerves the Name of *Salem* in the *latter*, ſo is it thought to preſerve the Name of *Jebus* in the *former* Part of it, and to be nothing elſe, but a *Compound* of *Jebus* and *Salem*, which, for the better Sound's Sake, by the Change of one Letter, and the Omiſſion of another, is ſoften'd into *Jeruſalem*.

WHETHER this City ſtood in the *Center* of the World, or no, we ſhall not pretend to determine, tho' ſome † very zealouſly contend for it; ſince it is a Matter of more material Diſquiſition, in what Tribe it may be ſuppos'd to have been ſituated. In the Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan*, and at the famous Battle of *Gibeon*, *(c) Joſhua* put to Death the King of *Jeruſalem*, and, very probably, took the City, tho', by ſome Means or other not mention'd in Scripture, the *Jebuſites* afterwards got Poſſeſſion, and continu'd their Poſſeſſion even till the Days of *David*. In the Diviſion of the Land, it was apparently one of thoſe Cities, which *(d)* were given to the Tribe of *Benjamin*; and yet, when we read that, at one Time, *(e) the Children of* Judah, *could not drive out the* Jebuſites, and, at another, *(f) that the Children of* Judah *took and burnt* Jeruſalem, one would be tempted to think, that it lay within the Limits of that Tribe: But then this Difference may be eaſily reconcil'd

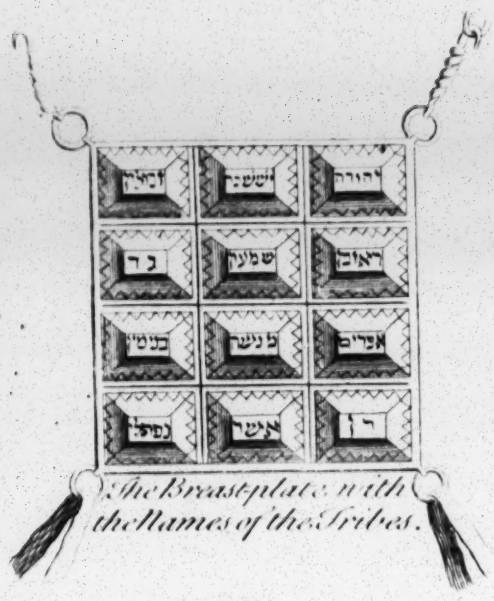
(z) Gen. xiv. 18. *(a)* Heb. vii. 2. *(b)* Compare Joſh. xv. 8. with 1 Chron. xi. 4.

† To this Purpoſe they obſerve, that the ſacred Writers are very well acquainted with this, as appears by that Paſſage of *Ezekiel*, Chap. v. 5. *Thus ſaith the Lord God, this is* Jeruſalem; *I have ſet it in the Midſt of the Nations and Countries round about her.* For what Purpoſe he did this, the Pſalmiſt has not been wanting to inform us, *Out of* Sion, ſays he, *the Perfection of Beauty, God hath ſhined*, Pſalm l. 2. Here the Almighty kept his Court, and from hence he ſent out his Embaſſadors, the Prophets, to publiſh his Decrees to the whole World around him, with more Eaſe, and ſpeedier Conveyance, than could poſſibly be done from any other Region of the habitable World. From hence, as from a central Point, the Light of the Law at firſt, and the Goſpel afterwards, ſhone out to the ſurrounding Nations, and therefore we find *Jeruſalem*, emphatically called *the City of our God, the Mountain of his Holineſs, beautiful for Situation, and the Joy of the whole Earth*, Pſal. xlviii. 1, 2. The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

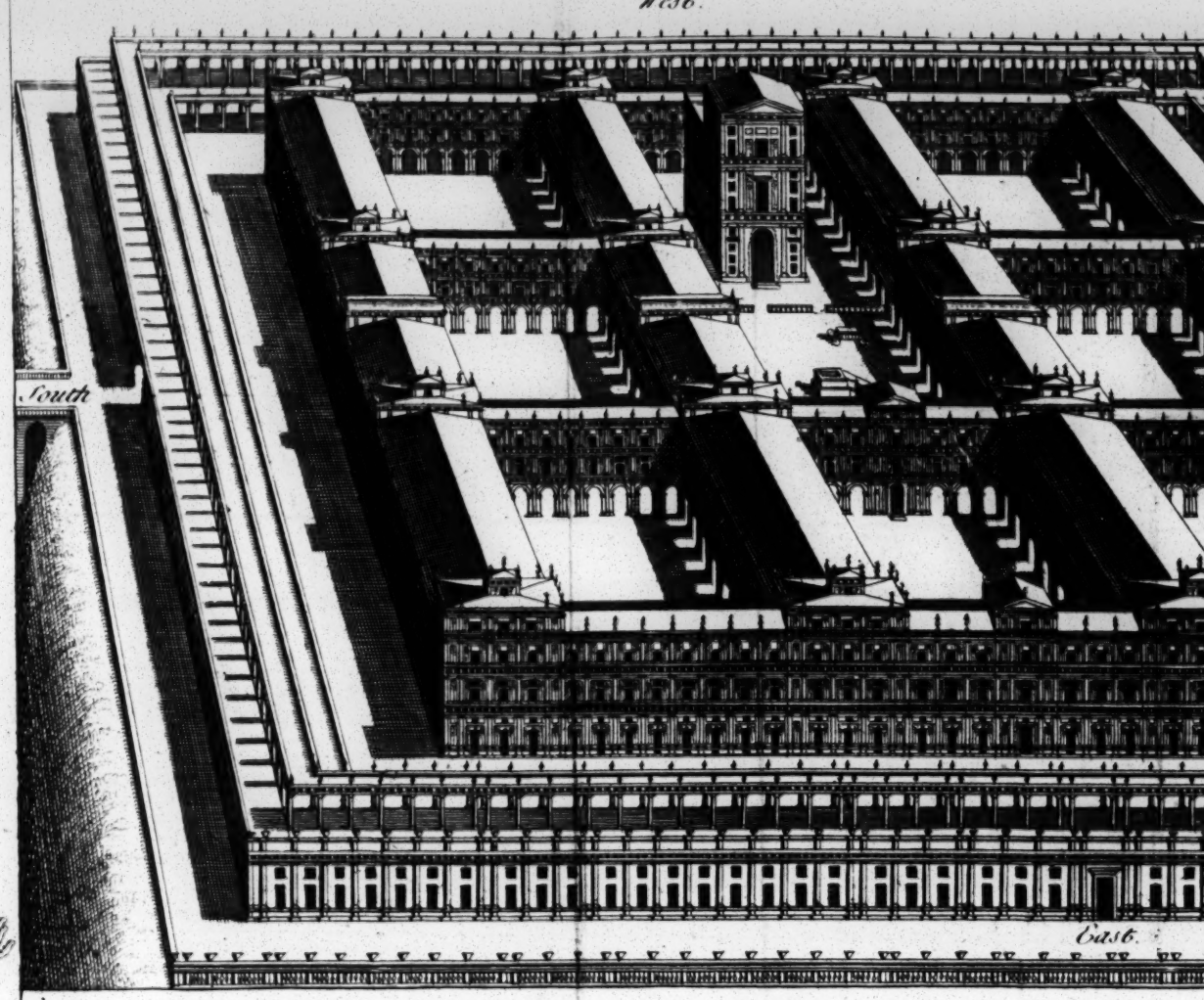
(c) Joſh. x. 23, 40. and xii. 10. *(d)* Joſh. xviii. 28. *(e)* Joſh. xv. 63. *(f)* Judg. i. 8.

Pl. 67

Solomon built the House of the Lord on the Mount where the Lor

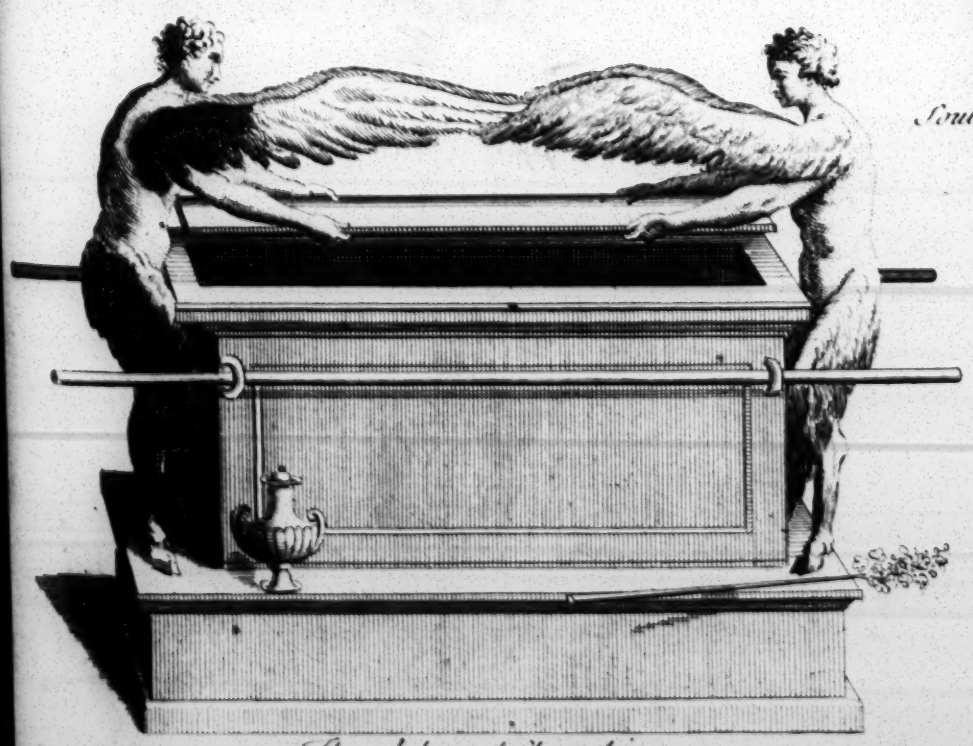


The Breastplate with the Names of the Tribes.

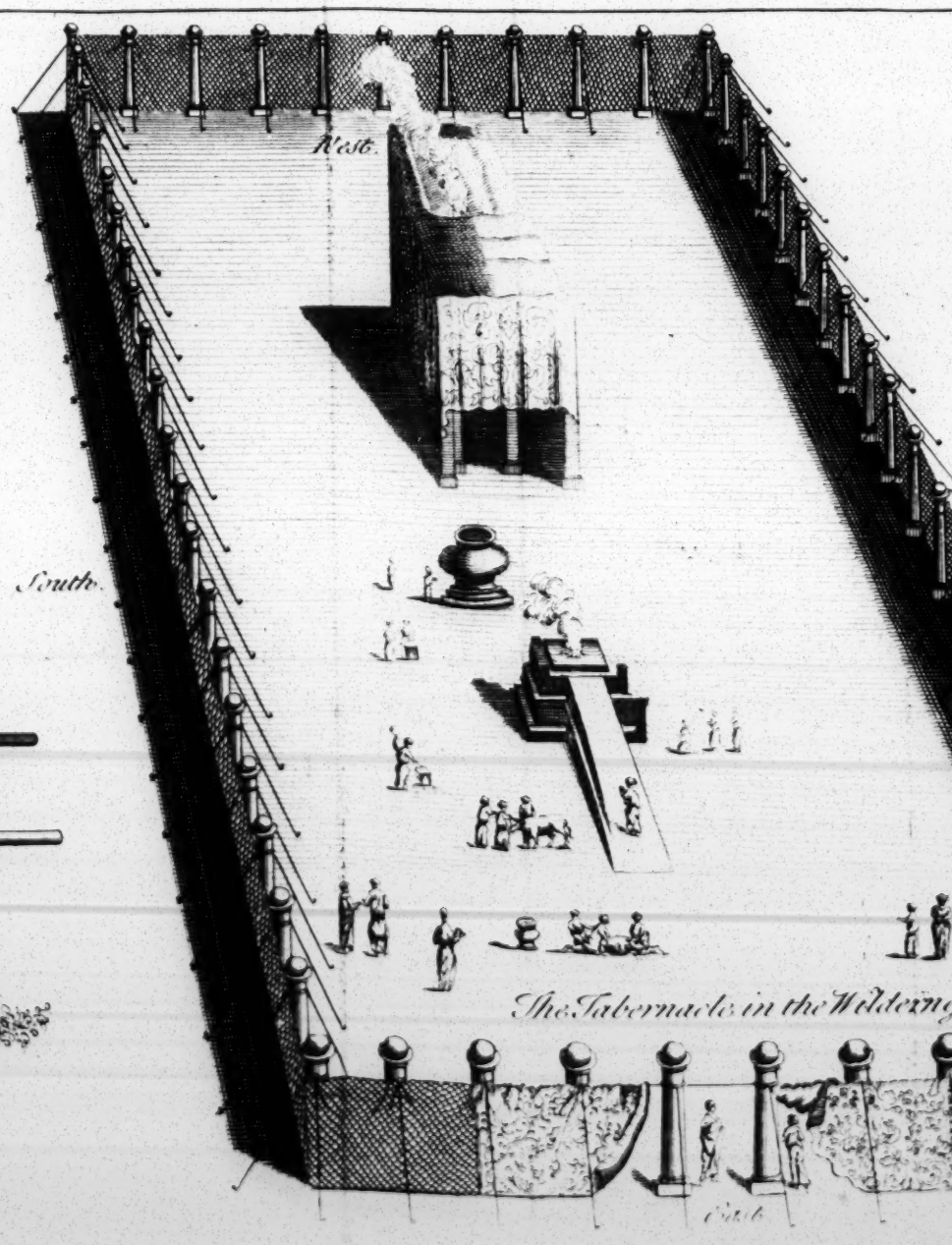


The Temple of So

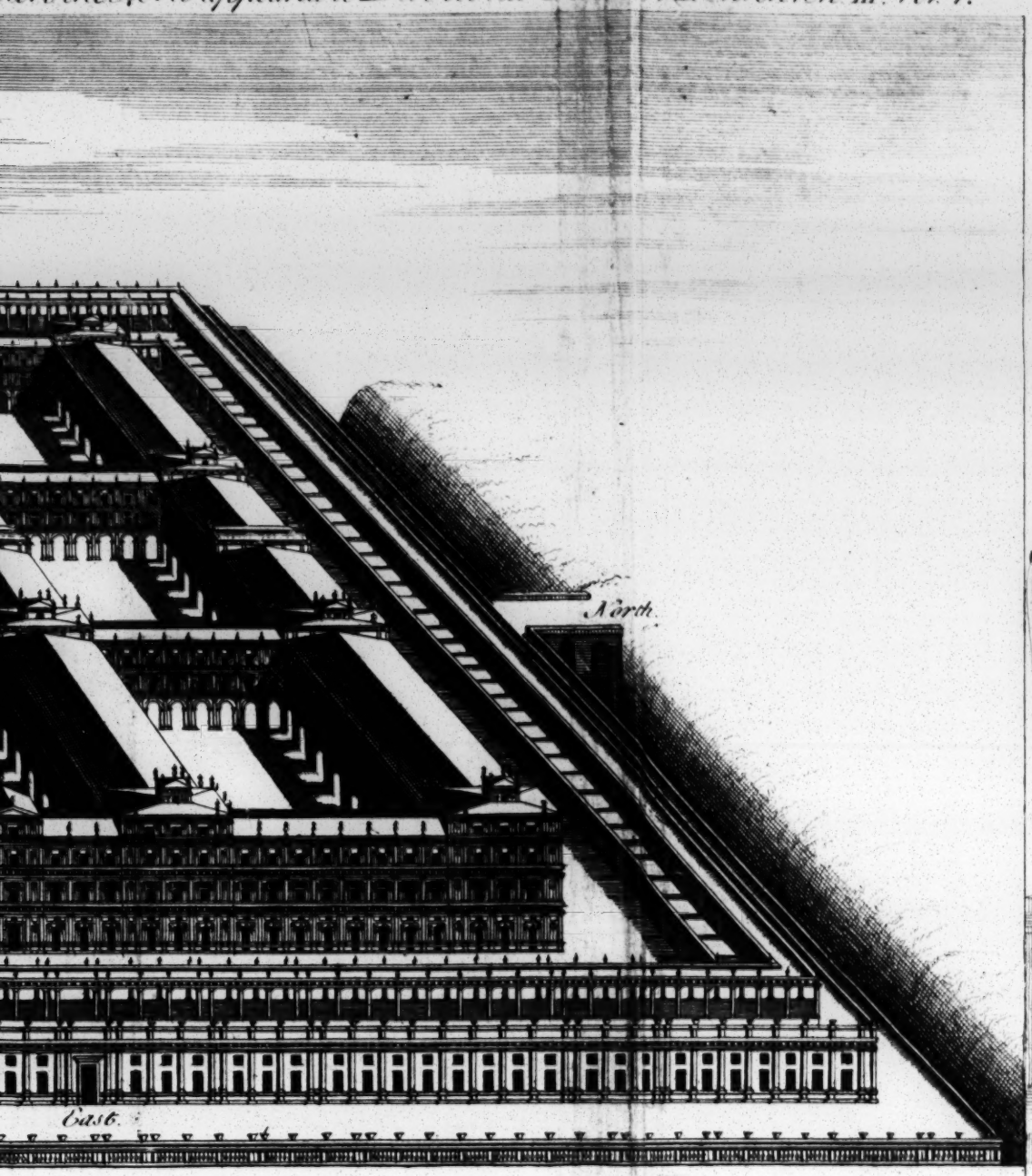
The Man of Incense within ye Temple.



The Ark and Cherubims.

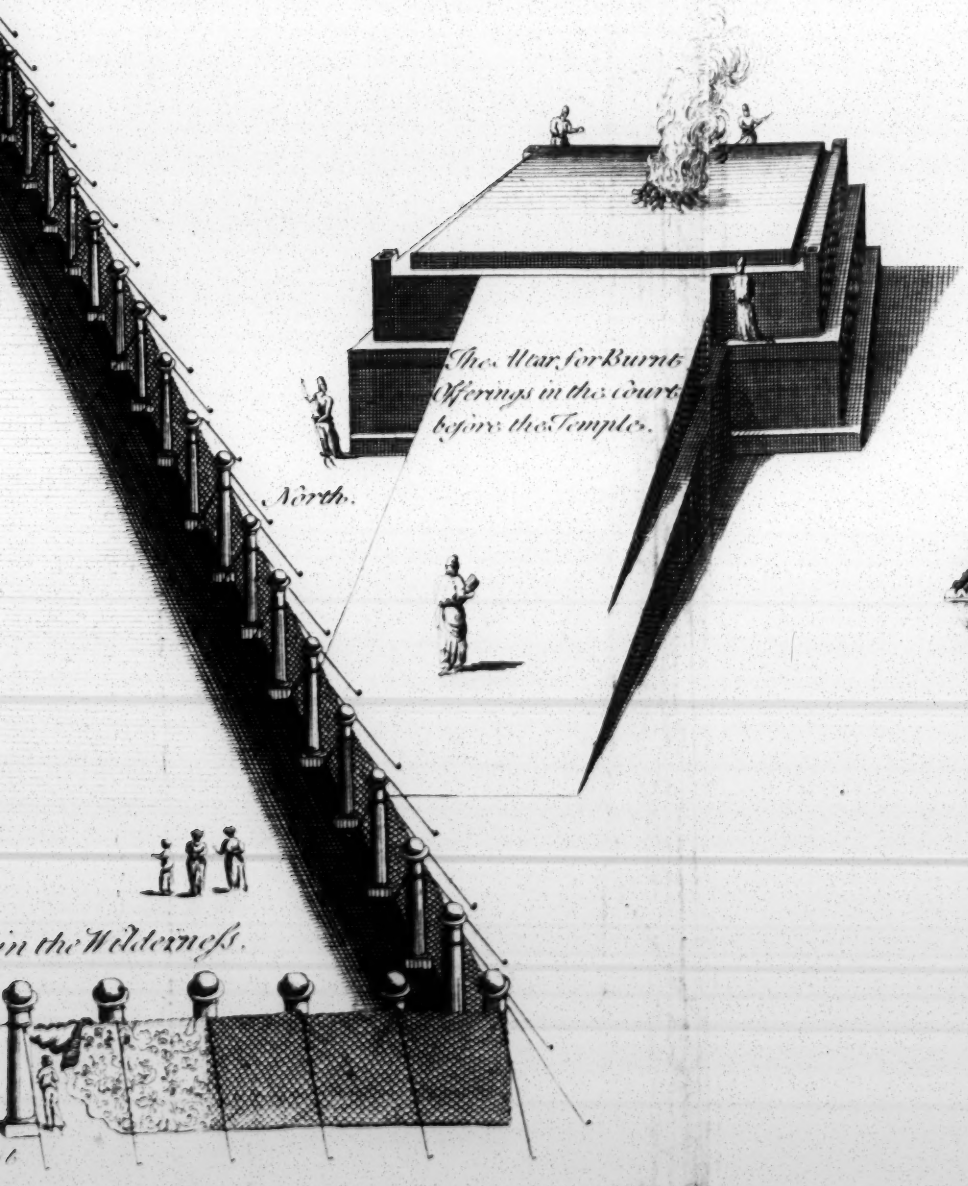


The Tabernacle in the Wilderne

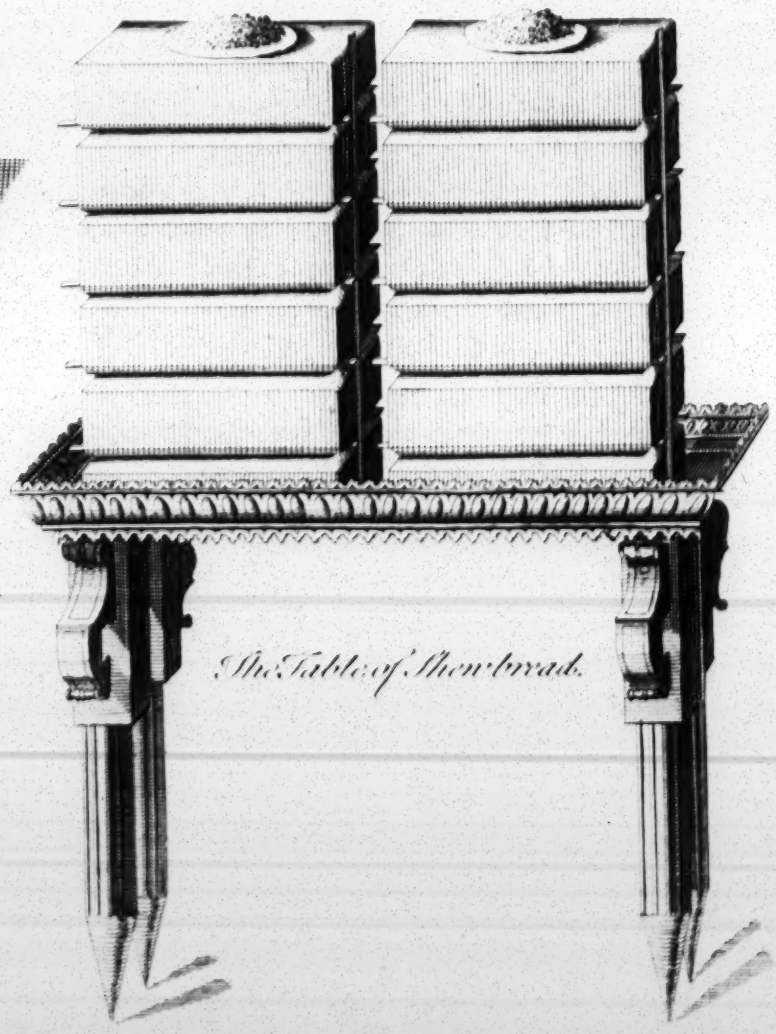


le of Solomon.

Moses.



in the Wilderness.



The Table of Shewbread.

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reconcil'd, if we will but conſider, that, as this City was built on the *Frontiers* of both Tribes, it is ſometimes made a Part of the one, and ſometimes of the other; that, by *Joſhua*'s Diviſion of the Country, *Benjamin* had moſt Right to it, but, by the Right of Conqueſt, *Judah*; however, when it came to be made the *Metropolis* of the whole Nation, it was thought to belong to the *Iſraelites* in common, and therefore was claimed by *neither*.

THE City of *Jeruſalem* was built upon two Hills, and encompaſs'd all round with Mountains. It was ſituated in a barren and ſtony Soil; but the Places adjacent were well water'd, having the Fountains of *Gion* and *Siloam*, and the Brook *Kidron* at the Foot of its Walls. *Jebus*, or the antient City, which *David* took, was ſeated on a Hill towards the *South*; and, on the oppoſite Quarter, towards the *North*, was Mount *Sion*, where *David* built a new † City, and called it after his own Name, and where ſtood his royal Palace likewiſe †, and the Temple of the Lord; for the Temple was built upon Mount *Moriah*, which was one of the Hills belonging to Mount *Sion*.

BETWEEN theſe two Mountains lay the Valley of *Millo*, which formerly ſeparated antient *Jebus* from the City of *David*, but was afterwards filled up by *David* and *Solomon*, to make a Communication between the two Cities: But beſides this Valley of *Millo*, we read in Scripture of *(g) the Houſe of* Millo, which is ſaid to be *(h) in the City of* David, and therefore was built either on Mount *Sion*, or ſome adjacent Place. Let us then enquire a little what this *Houſe of* Millo might poſſibly be.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

MILLO, conſider'd in its *Etymology*, is thought to be deduc'd from a *Root*, which ſignifies *to be full*, and is therefore, in the ſacred Hiſtory, ſuppos'd to denote *a large capacious Place*, deſign'd for publick Meetings, or, in ſhort, a *Senate-Houſe*. That this was ſome publick Edifice, I think may be inferr'd from the Notice, that is taken of it among ſome other of *Solomon*'s publick Buildings, where the Reaſon of the Tax, which he levy'd upon his Subjects, is ſaid to be this, —— *(i) That he might build the Houſe of the Lord, and his own Houſe, and* Millo, *and the Walls of* Jeruſalem; &c. for, ſince we find it join'd with the *Houſe of the Lord, and the Walls of* Jeruſalem, we cannot but ſuppoſe, that it was a Building of the ſame publick Nature; and ſince we find farther, that *(k)* the *Servants of King* Joaſh *aroſe, and made a Conſpiracy, and ſlew him in the Houſe of* Millo, very probably when he was come thither to debate, and conſult with his Princes, and other chief Men, the Thing ſeems to be inconteſtable, that this *Houſe of* Millo was erected for a publick *Senate-Houſe*, tho' there is ſome Reaſon to imagine, that it was employ'd likewiſe for other Purpoſes.

Its Buildings.

IN

† This City was of a circular Form, ſituate on a much higher Hill, and ſurrounded with a broad, deep *Trench*, hewn (whether by Art, or Nature) out of a natural Rock. This Trench was defended by a *Wall* of great Strength, erected upon its inner Edge, and this Wall was, in like Manner, defended and beautify'd with ſtrong and ſquare *Towers*, at regular Diſtances; which Towers are ſaid to have been built of white Marble, the loweſt 60, and the higheſt 120 Cubirs high, but all exactly of one Level on the Top, altho' in themſelves of very different Heights, according to the Declivity of the Ground, on which they ſtood. The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

† The Tower, which went under the Name of *David*, was ſituate upon the utmoſt Angle of Mount *Sion*, and the Beauty and fine Proportion of this Fabrick, as well as the Uſe that was made of it, may be fairly inferr'd from that famous Compariſon of *Solomon*'s; *Thy Neck is like the Tower of* David, *built for an Armoury, whereon there hang a Thouſand Bucklers, all Shields of mighty Men*, Cant. iv. 4. *The Tower of Furnaces*, which probably had it's Name from the many Fires, that were lighted up in it at once, anſwer'd all the Ends of a *Pharos*, or Watch-Tower, both to Land and Sea. By the Advantage of its Situation, it could not fail of being an excellent Light-Houſe both to the *Mediterranean*, and *Red-Sea*, and was probably ſo contriv'd, as to illuminate a great Part of the City likewiſe, and in that Reſpect, was not only a glorious Ornament, but of excellent Uſe. The *Houſe of the Mighty* was a Palace, erected by *David*, in Honour of his *Worthies*, or Chieftains in War, in which they had Apartments, according to their Reputation and Merit in Arms, were always ready at Hand, for Counſel or Aid, as the King's Affairs requir'd, and at leiſure Hours, by ſuperintending and inſtructing the Youth in their Military Exerciſes, anſwer'd all the Purpoſes of a *Royal Academy*, for the Science of War. The Hiſtory of the Life of King *David*, Vol. II.

(g) 2 Kings xii. 20. *(h)* 2 Chron. xxxii. 5. *(i)* 1 Kings ix. 15 *(k)* 2 Kings xii. 20.

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In the Reign of *Hezekiah*, when *Sennacherib* came againſt *Jeruſalem* with a Purpoſe to beſiege it, the King took Counſel with his Princes, and, among other Things, that were thought proper for his Defence, 'tis ſaid, *(l) that he built up all the Wall that was fallen, and repaired* Millo, *and made Darts and Shields in Abundance.* From whence we may infer, that this *Millo* was a Place of great Conſequence to the Strength of *Jeruſalem*, and was very probably, made to ſerve two Purpoſes, *i. e.* to be both a *Parliament-Houſe*, and an *Arſenal.*

The Palace, which *David* built for himſelf, (to which was adjoin'd that which his Son built for the King of *Egypt*'s Daughter) muſt needs have been a very magnificent Structure, ſince he had both his *(m)* Workmen and Materials ſent him † from *Tyre*, which, at that Time, ſurpaſs'd all other Nations in the Art of Building: But of this, we can give no other Account, than that it ſtood *weſtward* from the Temple, and conſiſted of a large ſquare Court, defended by Flankers, from one of which was the Deſcent by Stairs into the Gardens, which, in all Probability, were water'd by the Fountain of *Siloam.*

Its Fountains. This Fountain of *Siloam* riſes juſt under the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, on the *eaſt* Side thereof, between the City and the Brook *Kidron*; and in all Probability was the ſame with the Fountain *Enrogel*, or the *Fuller*'s *Fountain*, whereof we find Mention *(n)* in *Joſhua*, and in the Books of *Samuel*, and the *Kings.* Some Travellers will have it, that the Water of this Fountain is *brackiſh*, and has not a good Taſte; but the Prophet *Iſaiah*, when he utters the Complaint of God againſt the *Jews, (o) foraſmuch as this People refuſeth the Waters of* Shiloah, *which go ſoftly*, &c. ſeems to denote the contrary. However this be, St *Jerom* himſelf affirms, that the Waters of this Fountain made the Valley, through which they ran, (as watering the Gardens and Plantations that were there) very pleaſant and delightful. From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

The Fountain of *Gihon*, which ſprings very probably from an anjacent Hill of the ſame Name, was on the *weſt* Side of *Jeruſalem*; and as King *Hezekiah (p)* order'd the *upper Channel* of this Fountain to be convey'd into *Jeruſalem*, that when the City was beſieg'd, the Enemy might not have the Benefit of its Waters; ſo we need not doubt, but *(q)* that that other Spring of *Siloam* was, in like Manner, convey'd into the City, and that, for the Convenience of its Inhabitants, they were both, in ſeveral Places, diſtributed *(r)* into *Pools*; tho' ſome make that of *Siloam* to be without the Walls.

The Brook *Kidron* runs in the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*, on the *Eaſt* of *Jeruſalem*, between the City, and the Mount of *Olives.* It has uſually no great Quantity of Water in it, and is frequently quite dry; but, upon any ſudden Rains, it ſwells exceedingly, and runs with great Impetuoſity. It was indeed of ſingular Service to the *antient* City, as it receiv'd its Common-Sewers, and, upon every ſuch violent Flood, empty'd them into the *Dead-Sea.*

Its Mountains. The Mount of *Olives*, which doubtleſs had its Name from the great Quantity of *Olive-Trees* that grew there, was ſituated to the *Eaſt* of *Jeruſalem*, and parted from the City only by the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*, and the Brook *Kidron*; for which Reaſon, it is ſaid to be a *Sabbath-Day's Journey*, i. e. about a Mile from it. It was on this Mountain that *Solomon* built Temples to the Gods of the *Ammonites*, and of the *Moabites*, in Complaiſance to his Wives, who were Natives of theſe Nations;

(l) 2 Chron. xxxii. 5. *(m)* 1 Chron. xiv. 1.

† This muſt be underſtood of the *Old Tyre*, which was ſituate upon the *Continent*, and where the Temple of *Hercules* ſtood, of whoſe *Antiquity Herodotus* talks ſo much; and not of the *New Tyre*, which ſtood upon a neighbouring Iſland, but was not built until the Days of *Solomon. Calmet*'s Dictionary, under the Word.

(n) Joſh. xv. 7. 2 Sam. xvii. 17. and 1 Kings i. 9. *(o)* Iſaiah viii. 6. *(p)* 2 Chron. xxxii. 30.
(q) *Lamy*'s Introduction, lib. i. c. 3. *(r)* John ix. 7.

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Nations; and for this Reaſon it is likewiſe called in Scripture, *(s)* the *Mount of Corruption*, becauſe ſuch as follow vain Idols, are frequently ſaid in Scripture *to corrupt themſelves*. *(t)* Some indeed have imagin'd, that this *Mount of Corruption* was a diſtinct Place, but the Matter of Fact is, that *Mount Olivet* had three *Summits*, or was made up of three ſeveral Mountains, rang'd one after another, from *North* to *South*. The Middle *Summit* was that, from which our Lord *aſcended*; towards the *South* was that, whereon *Solomon (u) ſet up his Abominations*; and towards the *North* was the higheſt of all, *(x)* which was commonly called *Galilee*.

MOUNT *Calvary*, which, in all Appearance, had its Name * from the Similitude it bore to the Figure of a Skull, or Man's Head, was to the *Weſt* of the antient *Jeruſalem*, juſt without the Gates: And, as our Saviour ſuffer'd there, we may preſume it was the common Place, where Criminals of all Kinds were generally executed.

Its Vallies.

THE *Valley of Hinnon*, or of the *Sons of Hinnon*, lay to the *South* of the City, and was remarkable for the cruel and barbarous Worſhip of *Moloch*, where Parents made *their Children paſs thro' the Fire*, or be *burnt in the Fire*, by Way of Sacrifice to that Idol; and where it was uſual to have muſical Inſtruments (from whence it obtain'd likewiſe the Name of *Tophet*, the *Hebrew* Word *Toph* ſignifying the ſame as *Tympanum* in *Latin*, and *Timbrel* in *Engliſh*) to drown the lamentable Shrieks of the Children thus ſacrific'd. In this Place there was afterwards kept a perpetual Fire, to conſume the dead Carcaſſes and Excrements, which were brought from *Jeruſalem*; and therefore our Saviour, alluding to this, calls *Hell* by the Name of *Ge-henna*, or *the Valley of* Hinnon.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THE *Valley of Jehoſaphat*, which is likewiſe called *the Valley of Kidron*, becauſe of the above-mention'd Brook which runs through it, lies on the *Eaſt* of *Jeruſalem*, between the City, and the Mount of *Olives*. Our Saviour indeed aſcended from this Mount; but the Notion is very extravagant, that, when he returns again, he will judge the World in this Valley, merely becauſe the Prophet *Joel* hath ſaid, *(y) I will gather all Nations, and will bring them into the Valley of* Jehoſaphat, *and will plead with them for my People*; for, what is there called *the Valley of Jehoſaphat*, is not a *proper*, but an *appellative* Name, and denotes no more, than the *Judgment of God*.

THERE is another Valley, that the Scripture makes early Mention of, and that is, *(z) the Valley of Shaveh*, which is likewiſe called *the King's Dale*, where *Melchizedeck met* Abraham, *in his Return from the Slaughter of Chederlaomer*. According to *Joſephus*, it was, in his Time but about two Furlongs diſtant from *Jeruſalem*, and for this Reaſon perhaps, it has been thought by ſome, to be no other, than the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*; tho' others make it different, yet ſo, as to come up near to the ſaid Valley, and to lie on the *South-Eaſt* Part of the City, not far from the King's Gardens. *(a)* Why it obtain'd the Name of the *King's Dale*, whether it was from its near Situation to the King's Palace and Gardens, or from its being the Place, where the Kings were wont to exerciſe themſelves, or,

(s) 2 Kings xxiii. 13. (t) *Wells's* Geography of the Old Teſtament. (u) 2 Kings xxiii. 13.
(x) Vide *Reland's* Palæſt.

* Some formerly have been of Opinion, that this Mount was called *Calvary*, becauſe the *Head* of the firſt Man in the World was bury'd there, and that our Saviour was crucify'd in the ſame Place; that his Blood, running down upon the Body of this Perſon, might reſtore him to Life, and procure him the Favour of a Reſurrection. To ſupport this Tradition, they tell us, that *Noah*, having preſerv'd *Adam's* Body in the Ark, diſtributed the ſeveral Parts of it to his Children, and, as a particular Favour, gave the Skull, or Head, to *Shem*, who was to be the Parent of that holy Stock, from whom the *Meſſias* was to come; and that *Shem*, with a Spirit of Foreſight, bury'd the Skull in *Calvary*, where he knew the *Meſſias* would be crucify'd. But neither the antient Fathers, nor any modern Authors, that mention this *Tradition*, were ever perſuaded of its Truth; and (without any Diſreſpect to them) we may look upon all this as mere Fiction. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *Calvary*.

(y) Joel iii. 2. (z) Gen. xiv. 17, 18. (a) *Wells's* Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

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or, at leaſt, to entertain themſelves with ſeeing others perform their Exerciſes of Running, Riding, and the like, is not agreed, and very likely will never be determin'd.

Its Gates.

There were ſeveral Gates belonging to the antient *Jeruſalem*, that are mention'd in Scripture, but it is no eaſy Matter to diſcover where their particular Situation was. There is Reaſon to believe likewiſe, that their Names have been vary'd, or that one and the ſame Gate has gone under different Appellations; and, as there were ſeveral *Circuits* of Walls in the City, which had their reſpective Gates, it is more than probable, that ſome of theſe Gates did not lead out of the City into the Country. *The Gate of the Valley*, which doubtleſs had its Name from leading into ſome Valley, (and, * as Travellers will have it) to the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*, was ſituate on the *Eaſt* Side of the City.

The *Dung-gate*, which ſeems to have taken its Name from the *Dung* and Filth of the Beaſts, that were ſacrific'd at the Temple, being carried out of it, was probably the ſame with what is now ſo called, and ſtands on the *Eaſt* Side of the City likewiſe.

The *Water-gate*, which took its Name from its Uſe, becauſe thro' it was the Water brought to ſerve the City and the Temple, was *(b)* on the ſame Side; and ſo was

The *Gate of the Fountain*, (ſo called from its Nearneſs to the Fountain of *Siloam*) only inclining a little towards the *South*.

The *Gate of Ephraim*, which open'd to the main Road, leading to the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and from it deriv'd its Name, ſtood on the *North* Side of the City, becauſe on that Side was that Tribe ſeated; *(c)* tho' others had rather place it on the *Weſt*.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

The *Horſe-gate*, *Sheep-gate*, and *Fiſh-gate* are ſuppos'd by ſome to have had their Denominations from the ſeveral Markets of theſe Creatures, that were kept there. The *Horſe* and *Sheep-gates* were both on the *Eaſt* Side, not far from the Palace and the Temple; and the *Fiſh-gate* was on the *North*, tho' ſome, who think it had its Name from the *Fiſh* that were brought from the *Mediterranean-Sea*, had rather place it on the *Weſt* Side.

Laſtly, *The High-gate*, or *the Gate of Benjamin*, ſo called from its Situation towards the Land or Tribe of *Benjamin*, is ſuppos'd by ſome to have been the *principal* Gate of the Royal Palace; but from what we read, *(d)* concerning *Jeremiah*'s being groſsly abus'd near this Gate, it appears to have been ſituated by *the Houſe of the Lord*.

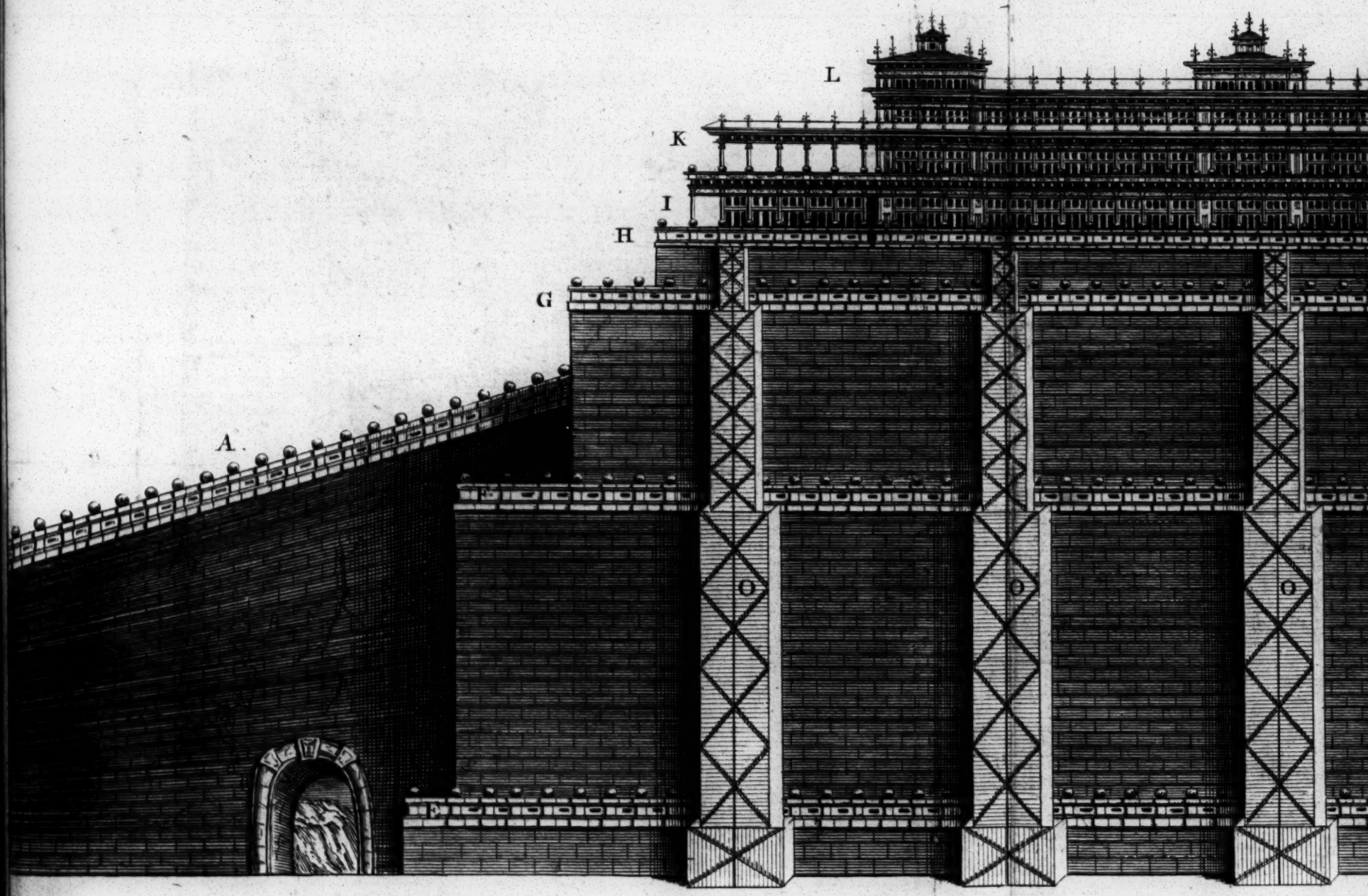
Its royal Sepulchres.

Thus we have paſs'd through moſt of the Gates of this antient City; and on the *North* Side of it, (*without* the Walls *now*, but *then* probably *within* them) we meet with ſome *ſubterraneous* Chambers, that are wonderfully magnificent, and at preſent, called the *Sepulchres of the Kings*, *(e)* of which ſome late Travellers give us a Deſcription to this Effect: —— "When you "come to the Place, you paſs through "an Entry, hew'd out of a Rock, "which admits you into an open Court "about twenty ſix Feet ſquare, all cut "out of the Rock, which is of ſolid "Marble, and ſerves inſtead of Walls. "On the Left-Hand of this *Court* is a "*Portico* nine Paces long, and four broad, "(with

* Our Countryman, Mr *Sandys*, is of Opinion, that the *Gate of the Valley*, was formerly the ſame with what is now called *St Stephen*'s *Gate*, not far from the *Golden* Gate, or great Gate, which leads into that, which was formerly the *Court of the Temple*. He likewiſe ſuppoſes, that this Gate of St *Stephen*'s was formerly called the *Sheep Gate*; but into this Opinion perhaps he might be led by the Nearneſs of St *Stephen*'s Gate to the Pool of *Bethesda*, where the Sacrifices were waſh'd, before they were brought to the Prieſt to be offer'd: And therefore, ſince the *Valley-Gate*, and the *Sheep-Gates* are diſtinctly mention'd by *Nehemiah*, we cannot but think, that they muſt have been different Gates. *Wells*'s Geography of the Old Teſtament, Vol. III.

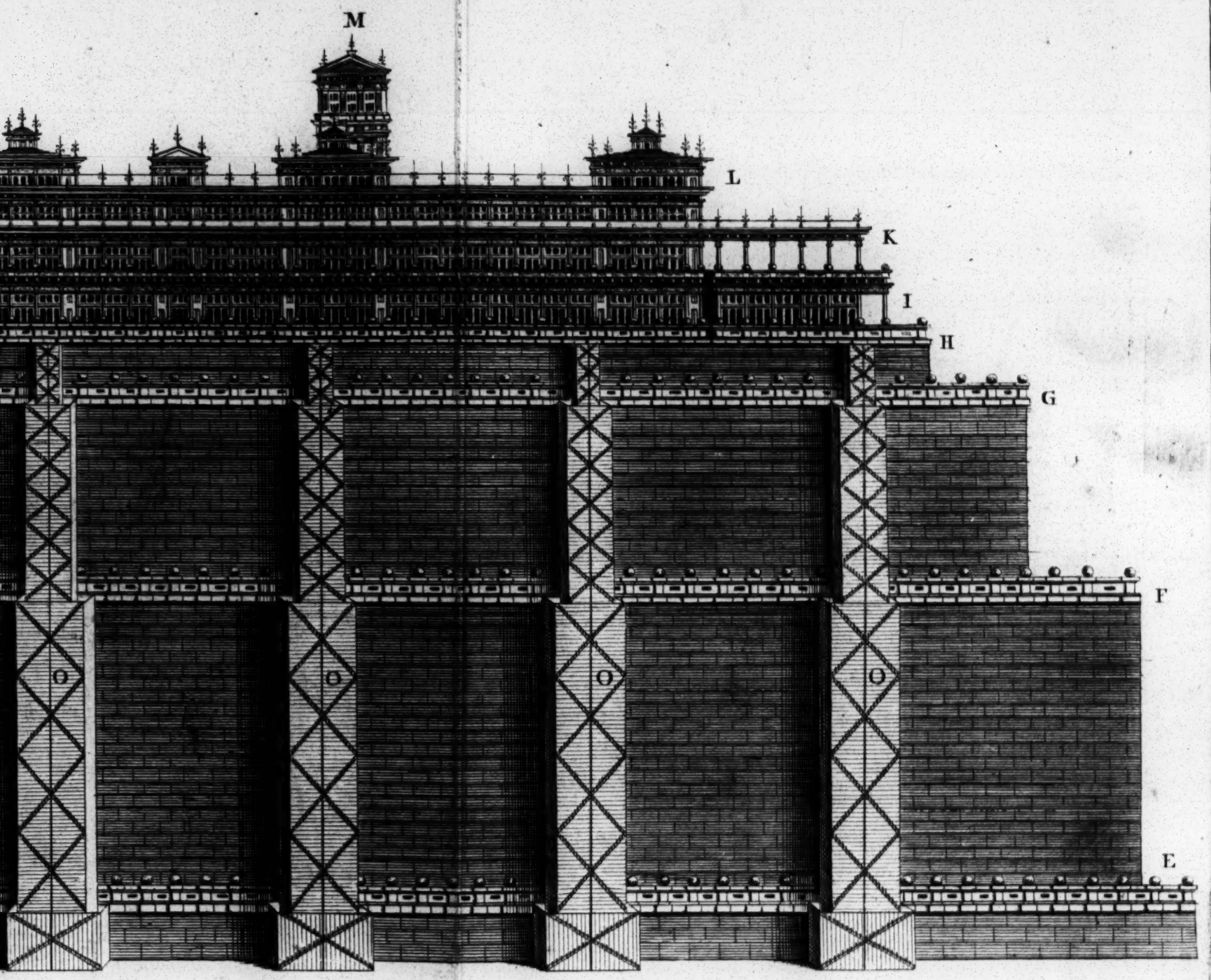
(*b*) Nehem. iii. 26.
(*c*) Explication du nouveau Plan de l'ancienne *Jeruſalem*, par. M. *Calmet*.
(*d*) Jer. xx. 2.
(*e*) Vid. *Thevenot*'s Voyages, Part I. lib ii. c. 4. and *Maundrell*'s Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jeruſalem*.

The Prospect of the T



A The plain ascent on ȳ east side of ȳ Temple. EE The first walk r
ȳ Temple, like E & F, being a terrace walk quite round inclosed nth ba
from ȳ stairs O. II. The first building or ȳ cou^{rt} of ȳ Israelites, including ȳ
A gallery round ȳ Temple, over ȳ said building for ȳ people to w
Temple nth included ȳ courts of ȳ Priests M The porch before ȳ Tem
ȳ mount to ȳ ground plot of ȳ Temple, divided in ȳ middle by a wall

of the North side of the TEMPLE.



first walk round ȳ Temple. FF The second walk round ȳ Temple. GG A broad way before inclosed nr. battlements, called ȳ court of ȳ Gentiles. H,H, The landing place before ȳ Temple, including ȳ second court round ȳ Temple in ȳ inside whereof was Solomon's Porch. K,K, ȳ people to walk in, cover'd over at top & open on ȳ sides. L,L The second building all round the before ȳ Temple strictly so called being ȳ part nch is describ'd in Ki. & Chro. O, The stairs from ddle by a wall so ȳ one company might always go up, & ȳ other down, without interrupting each other.

I. Mynde sc.

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" (with a Kind of *Architrave* running " round its Front) cut out of the ſame " Rock, as are likewiſe the Pillars that " ſupport it. At the End of this *Portico* " there is a Paſſage into the Sepulchres, " which (when you have crept through " it with ſome Difficulty) lets you into a " large Chamber of above four and twen- " ty Feet ſquare. Its *Sides* and *Ceiling* " are ſo exactly ſquare, and its *Angles* " ſo juſt, that no *Architect*, with *Le-* " *vels* and *Plummets*, could build a Room " more regular. From this Room you " paſs into ſix more, one within ano- " ther, and all of the ſame Fabrick with " the firſt, except that the two innermoſt " are deeper than the reſt, and have a " Deſcent of about ſix or ſeven Steps into " them. In every one of theſe Rooms " (except the firſt) were *Coffins* of Stone, " plac'd in *Niches*, along the Sides of " the Room, and amount in all to about " fifty."

THIS perhaps is the only real Work that now remains of the *Old Jeruſalem*; and, what makes it juſtly look'd upon as a Wonder, is, that the Ceiling, the Doors, as well as all the reſt, their Hinges, their Poſts, their Frames, *&c.* are all cut out of the ſame continu'd Rock. It may therefore be worth our enquiring a little in what Manner theſe Structures were employ'd, and who poſſibly might be the Perſons, that were repoſited in them.

And who were bury'd in them.

THAT theſe *ſubterraneous* Structures were not the Sepulchres of the Kings of *Judah*, the Generality of thoſe that have inſpected them are agreed, becauſe the Scripture tells us, that *David*, and *Solomon*, and moſt of their Succeſſors were *(f) buried in the City of* David; and yet theſe *Grots* lie without the Gate of *Damaſcus* (as it is now called) at a conſiderable Diſtance from the *City of* David: But how far this *City of* David did formerly extend, or where we ſhall find any other Signs of * the Places, where *David* and the other Kings his Succeſſors were buried, we have no hints given us. The Reverend Mr *Maundrell*, from this Paſſage in Scripture, *(g) and* Hezekiah *ſlept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the chiefeſt of the Sepulchres of the Sons of* David, is of Opinion, that this was the Place, where *Hezekiah*, and the Sons immediately born to *David*, that were not repoſited in the *Royal* Sepulchres, were buried: But it is much more probable) and what both the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Verſions ſeem to confirm) that, by *the Sons of* David here, we are not to underſtand his *immediate* Sons, properly ſo called, but the Kings rather, that ſucceeded him. This is a Form of Speech frequently made uſe of by the ſacred Writers: And therefore the Senſe of *Hezekiah's being buried in the Sepulchres of the Sons of* David, muſt be, that he was buried in the Sepulchres of the Kings *deſcended from* David.

From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THE more probable Opinion, therefore, is that of *Le Bruyn*, who ſuppoſes, that theſe *Grots* were the Sepulchres of *Manaſſeh*, his Son *Amon*, and his Grandſon *Joſiah*, Kings of *Judah*. Of *Manaſſeh* the Scripture tells us expreſsly, that *(h) he was buried in the Garden of his own*

(f) 1 Kings ii. 10. and xi. 43.

* *Benjamin* of *Tudela*, who wrote about the Year 1173, relates, that, not above fifteen Years before, a Wall, belonging to Mount *Sion*, fell down, and the Prieſts ſet twenty Men to work upon it. Two of theſe Workmen, being one Day left alone, took up a Stone, which open'd a Paſſage into a *ſubterraneous* Place, into which they enter'd. There they found a Palace, ſupported by Marble Pillars, and cruſted over with Gold and Silver. At the Entrance was a Table, and upon this Table a Golden Crown and Sceptre. This, *ſay the* Jews, was *David's* Monument, and oppoſite to it was *Solomon's*, adorn'd in the like Manner. As they were attempting to penetrate farther, they were overſet by a *Whirlwind*, and remain'd ſenſeleſs till the Evening, when they heard a Voice, bidding them ariſe, and be gone. *Benjamin* aſſures us, that he had the Story from the Mouth of one *Abraham*, a *Phariſee*, who, *as he ſaid*, had been conſulted about this Event by the *Patriarch* of *Jeruſalem*, and declar'd, that this was *David's* Monument. But the whole of this Account has ſo much the Air of a Fable, that it is needleſs to confute it. *Calmet's* Dictionary, under the Word *David*.

(g) 2 Chron. xxxii. 33. *(h)* 2 Kings xxi. 18, 26.

A. M. 2981. &c. Ant. Chr. 1023. &c.

own House, in the Garden of Uzza; and of *Amon* it is said, that *he was buried in the Garden of* Uzza, which *Garden Manasseh* might, very probably, purchase, and, being taken with the Pleasantness of it, might there build him an House, which is here called *his own House*, in Contradistinction to the *royal* Palace, which was built and inhabited by his Ancestors on Mount *Sion*. Of *Josiah* indeed the sacred History does not say expressly, that he was buried here; all that it tells us is, that he *(i) was buried in the Sepulchres of his Fathers*, but whether in the *City of* David, or in the *Garden of* Uzza, it makes no Mention: And therefore, since both his *Father* and *Grandfather* were buried in this *Garden*, there is Reason to think, that *Josiah* was here buried likewise; especially considering, that, in one of these subterraneous Rooms, (as *Le Bruyn* tells us) which seem'd to be more lofty than the rest, there were three *Coffins* curiously adorn'd with carv'd Works, which he took to be the Coffins of these three Kings.

Its Temple.] BUT of all the Buildings, that antient *Jerusalem* had to boast of, the *Temple*, which *David* design'd, and *Solomon* perfected, was the most magnificent. We are not however to imagine, that this Temple was built like one of our Churches; for it did not consist of one single Edifice, but † of several Courts and Buildings, which took up a great deal of Ground. The Place whereon it was erected, was the Top of Mount *Moriah*, and the Building all together made an exact *Square* of eight hundred Cubits, or one thousand four hundred and sixty Feet long on each Side, exactly fronting the *East*, *West*, *North*, and *South*.

(k) To make this Building more firm and secure, it was found necessary to begin the Foundation at the Bottom of the Mount; so that the Sides were three hundred and thirty-three Cubits, or about six hundred and eight Feet high, before they were rais'd to the Level of the *Temple*; and this afforded a most noble Prospect towards the chief Part of the City, which lay *Westward*. It is impossible to compute the Labour of laying this Foundation, because it is impossible to tell how much of the Mountain must in some Places be remov'd, and in others filled up, to bring it to an exact Square for so great a Height: But when we consider, that there were 180,000 Workmen, for seven Years and an Half, constantly employ'd, we cannot but admire what Business could be found for so many Hands to do; and yet, when we reflect on the Vastness of this *Fabrick*, it would make one no less wonder, how, in so short a Time, it could possibly be compleated. "For the Foundation (as *Josephus* tells us) was laid prodigiously deep, and the Stones were not "only of the largest Size, but hard and "firm enough to endure all Weathers, and "be Proof against the Worm. Besides this, "they were so mortis'd into one another, "and so wedg'd into the Rock, that the "Strength and Curiosity of the *Basis* was "not less admirable, than the intended "*Superstructure*, and the one was every "Way answerable to the other." From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

THE *Ground-Plot*, upon which the Temple was built, was a Square of six hundred Cubits every Way. It was encompass'd with a Wall of six Cubits high, and the same in Breadth, and contain'd several Buildings for different Uses, surrounded with Cloysters supported by Marble Pillars. Within this Space was the *Court of the Gentiles* fifty Cubits wide, and

(*i*) 2 Chron. xxxv. 24.

† These several Parts of the Temple the *Greeks* are very careful to distinguish by different Names. What was properly the Temple, they called ὁ ναὸς; and the Courts, and other Parts of the Temple, τὸ ἱερὸν. Thus when *Zacharias* is said to have gone into the Temple to burn Incense, *Luke* i. 9. (which was done in the *Sanctum*) the Word is ναὸς; but when it is said, that *Anna* the Propheteſs departed not from the Temple, *Luke* ii. 37. (*i. e.* liv'd in that Part of the *Court of the Israelites*, which was appropriated to religious Women) the *Greek* Word is ἱερὸν. And this Observation holds good all through the New Testament. *Lamy*, de Tabern. lib. v. c. 5.

(*k*) *Bedford's* Chronology, lib. iv. c. 5.

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and adorn'd, in like Manner, with Cloyſters and Pillars. To ſeparate this Court from *the Court of the Iſraelites*, there was a Wall of five hundred Cubits ſquare. The Court of the *Iſraelites* was an hundred Cubits. It was pav'd with Marble of different Colours, and had four Gates, to every Quarter one, and each riſing with an Aſcent of ſeven Steps. To ſeparate this Court from the *Court of the Prieſts*, there was a Wall of two hundred Cubits ſquare; and the Prieſts Court was an hundred Cubits, encompaſs'd with Cloyſters, and Apartments, where the Prieſts, that attended the Service of the Temple, were us'd to live. This Court had but three Gates, to the *Eaſt*, to the *North*, and to the *South*, and were approach'd by an Aſcent of eight Steps. Theſe Courts were all open, and without any Covering, but, in caſe of Rain, or other bad Weather, the People could retire under the Cloyſters, that were ſupported with Rows of Pillars, and went round every Court. In the *Iſraelites Court*, over-againſt the Gate of the *Prieſts Court*, was erected a Throne for the King, (which was a magnificent *Alcove)* where he ſeated himſelf when he came to the Temple. In *the Prieſts Court* was the Altar of Burnt-Offerings, a great deal larger than that of the *Tabernacle*, having *ten* brazen Lavers, whereas the Tabernacle had but *one*, and a *Sea of Braſs* (which the *Tabernacle* had not) ſupported by twelve Oxen.

ON the *Weſt* Side of the *Altar of Burnt-Offerings*, there was an Aſcent of twelve Steps to what we may properly call the *Temple*; and this conſiſted of *three* Parts, the *Porch*, the *Sanctuary*, and the *Holy of Holies*. The *Porch* was about twelve Cubits long, and twenty broad, at the Entrance of which ſtood the two famous Pillars *Jachin* and *Boaz*, whoſe Names import, that *God alone was the Support of the Temple*; and its Gate was fourteen Cubits wide. The *Sanctuary*, or *Nave* of the Temple, was forty Cubits long, and twenty broad, wherein were the *Altar of Incenſe*, and the *Table of Shew-Bread*; but becauſe the Temple was larger, and wanted more Light than the *Tabernacle*, inſtead of *one*, it had *ten golden Candleſticks*. The *Holy of Holies* was a Square of twenty Cubits, wherein was plac'd the *Ark of the Covenant*, containing the *two Tables of Stone*, wherein God had engraven his ten Commandments, but inſtead of *two Cherubims* (as were in the Tabernacle) in the Temple there were *four*.

From 2 Sam. xix to 1 Kings viii.

ROUND about the Temple, and againſt the Walls thereof (as *Joſephus* tells us) were built thirty *Cells*, or little Houſes, which ſerv'd in the Way of ſo many *Butreſſes*, and were, at the ſame Time, no ſmall Ornament to it; for there were Stories of theſe Cells one above another, whereof the *ſecond* was narrower than the *firſt*, and the *third* than the *ſecond*, ſo that their *Roofs* and *Baluſtrades*, being within each other, made three different Terraſſes (as it were) † upon which one might walk round the Temple. Within, theſe little Houſes were *ceiled* with Cedar, their Walls were wainſcoted with the ſame, and embelliſh'd with Carving, and Fretwork, overlaid with Gold, which, with their dazzling Splendor, made every Thing about them look glorious.

UPON the Whole then, we may obſerve, *(l)* that the Glory of this Temple did

† The Temple itſelf, ſtrictly ſo called, had two *Stories*, the upper of which was rais'd quite above theſe little Houſes, and their Roofs; for their Roofs reach'd no higher than the Top of the *firſt* Story. The ſecond Story, which had no Building adjoining to its Side, made a large Room over the *Sanctuary*, and the *Holy of Holies*, of equal Dimenſions with them; and 'tis no improbable Opinion, that this was the *upper Chamber*, in which the *Holy Ghoſt* was pleas'd to deſcend upon the *Apoſtles* in a viſible Manner. This *upper Room* was appropriated to the pious *Laity*, as a Place for them to come and pay their Devotions in; and therefore it ſeems very likely, that the *Apoſtles* were here with other devout Perſons, while the Temple was full of *Jews* of all Nations, who were come to celebrate the Feaſt of the *Pentecoſt*, and that thereupon they below, hearing the Noiſe, which was occaſion'd by the Shaking of the Place, ran up to ſee the Cauſe of it, and, to their great Surprize, found the *Apoſtles* diſtinguiſh'd from the other *Jews* about them, both by *the cloven Tongues, which ſat upon each of them*, and by the ſeveral different Languages, that they ſpake. *Lamy*'s Introduction, lib. i. c. 4.

(*l*) *Prideaux*'s Connection, Part I. lib. iii.

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did not conſiſt in the Bulk or Largeneſs of it, (for in itſelf it was but a ſmall Pile of Building, no more than an hundred and fifty Feet in Length, and an hundred and five in Breadth, taking the Whole of it together from Out to Out, and is exceeded by many of our *Pariſh Churches)* but its chief Grandeur and Excellency lay in its Out-Buildings and Ornaments, in its Workmanſhip, which was every where very curious, and its Overlayings, which were vaſt and prodigious; for the Overlaying of the *Holy of Holies* only (which was a Room but thirty Feet ſquare, and twenty high) amounted to ſix hundred Talents of Gold, which comes to four Millions three hundred and twenty Thouſand Pounds of our *Sterling* Money.

To conclude this Diſſertation then, *(m)* in the Words of the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian, "The whole Frame, in fine, *ſays he*, "was rais'd upon Stones, poliſh'd to the "higheſt Degree of Perfection, and ſo "artificially put together, that there was "no Joint to be diſcern'd, no Sign of "any working Tools being upon them, "but the whole look'd liker the Work "of Providence, and Nature, than the "Product of Art, and human Invention. "And as for the Inſide, whatever Carv-"ing, Gilding, Embroidery, rich Silks, "and fine Linnen could do, of theſe "there was the greateſt Profuſion. The "very Floor of the Temple was overlaid "with beaten Gold, the Doors were "large, and proportion'd to the Height "of the Walls, twenty Cubits broad, "and ſtill Gold upon Gold." *In a Word, it was Gold all over, and* * *nothing was wanting, either within or without, that might contribute to the Glory and Magnificence of the Work.*

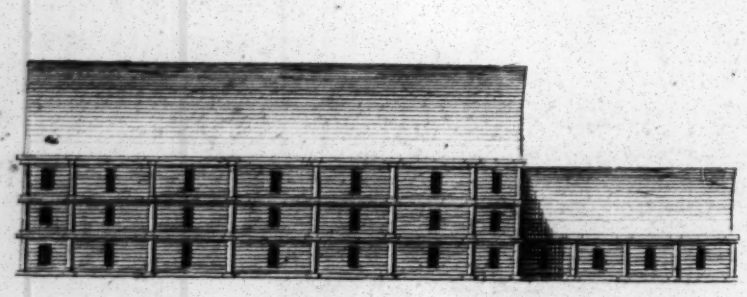
From 2 Sam. xix. to 1 Kings viii.

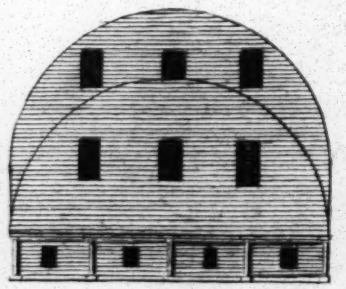
(m) Jewiſh Antiq. lib. viii. c. 2.

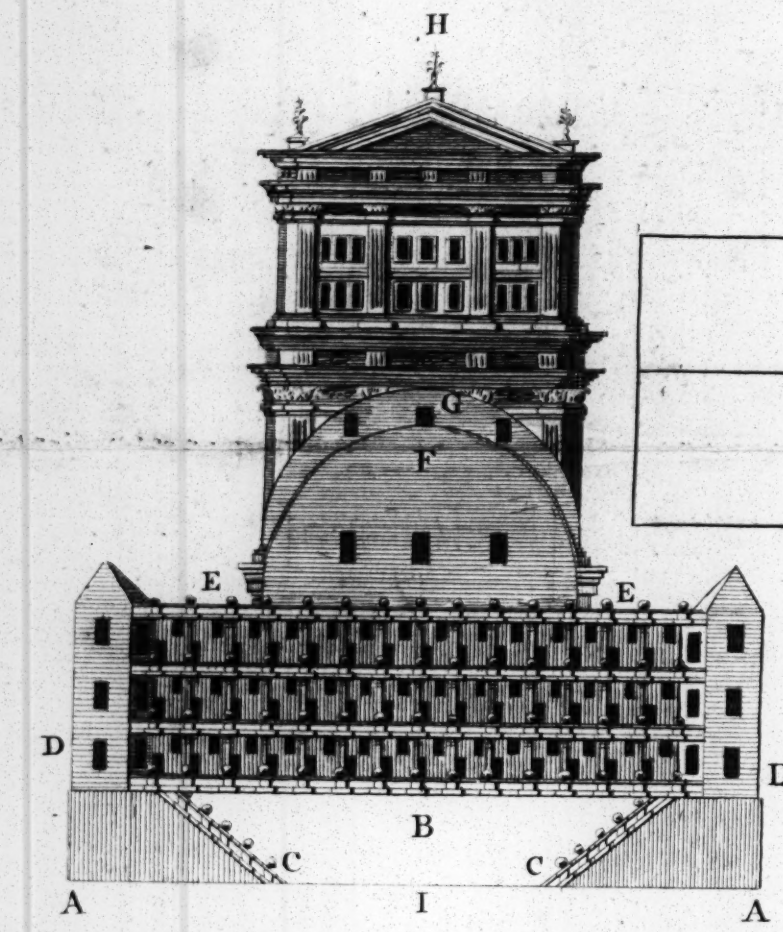
* It is not to be doubted, but that *Solomon* made all the Utenſils and Ornaments of the Temple proportionable, both in Number and Richneſs, to that of the Edifice; and yet *Joſephus* ſeems to have carry'd his Account beyond all Credibility, when he tells us, that there were 10,000 Tables, beſides thoſe of the Shew Bread; 10,000 Candleſticks, beſides thoſe in the holy Place; 80,000 Cups for Drink-Offerings; 100,000 Baſons of Gold, and double that Number of Silver: When he tells us, that *Solomon* caus'd to be made 1000 Ornaments for the ſole Uſe of the High-Prieſt; 10,000 Linnen Robes and Girdles, for that of the common Prieſts; and 200,000 more for the *Levites* and Muſicians: When he tells of 200,000 Trumpets, made according to *Solomon*'s Direction, with 200,000 more, made in the Faſhion, that *Moſes* had appointed, and 400,000 muſical Inſtruments of a mixt Metal, between Gold and Silver, called by the Ancients *Electrum*. Concerning all which, we can only ſay, that the Text is either ſilent, or contradicts this prodigious Account. Univerſal Hiſtory, Lib. i. c. 7. 2

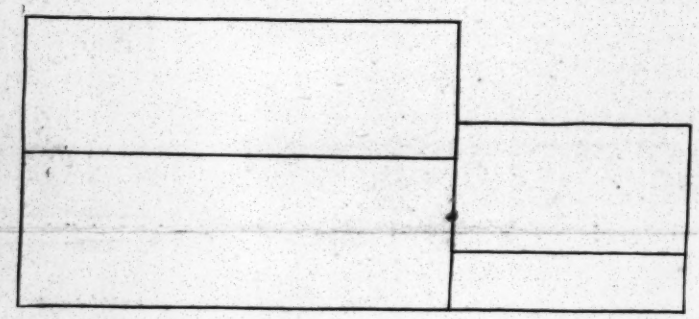
The End of the Fifth Book.

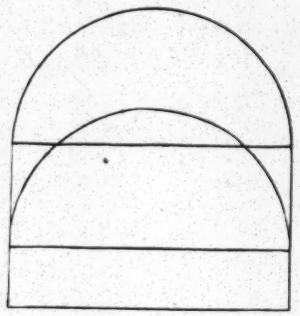
These are the Things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the House of God. II. Chron. Ch. III. Ver. 3.

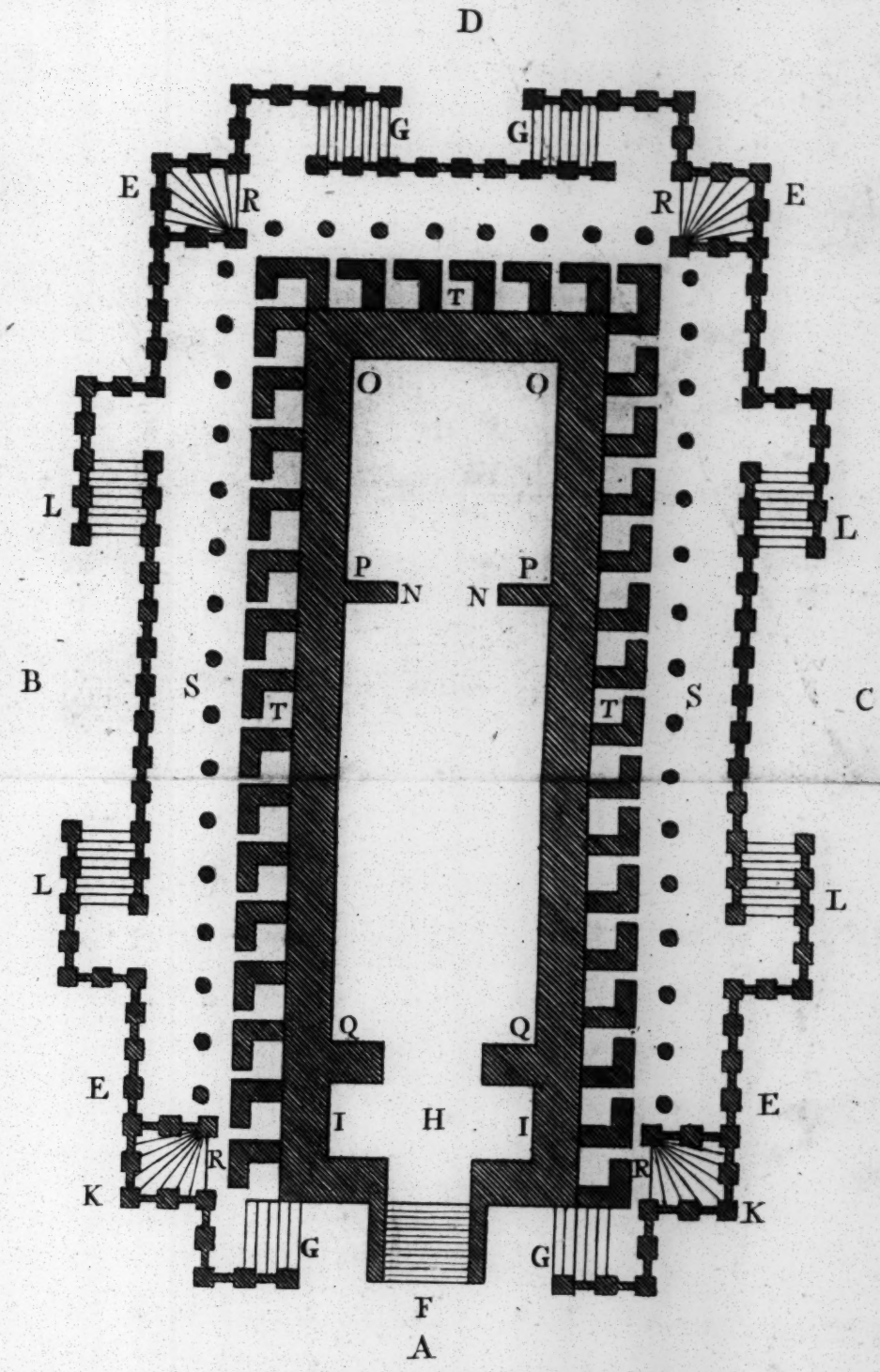












A

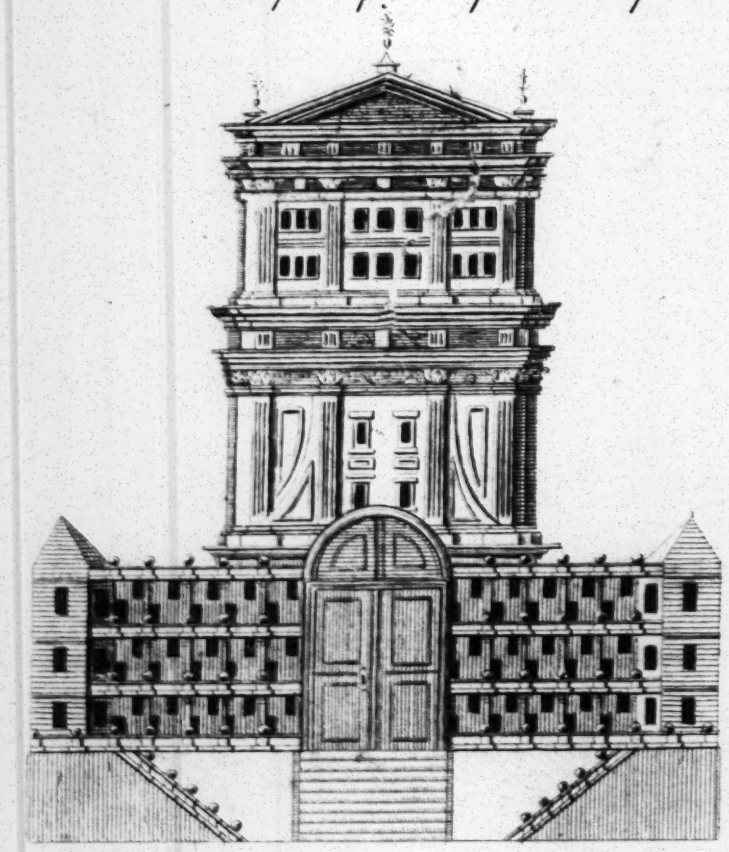
The North side of ỹ Temple. E *Stairs to go up from ỹ Court of ỹ Priests to ỹ level of ỹ floor of ỹ Temple.* F *The level of ỹ floor.* G *The winding stairs where two of ỹ sides appear one shewing ỹ windows & ỹ other ỹ doors landing upon ỹ galleries.* H *The Chambers of ỹ Priests in three rows with windows & ỹ door on ỹ right side with pillars opposite to each wall to Sup-*

The Ground Plot of the Temple strictly so call'd, as it is discrib'd in the Book of Kings & Chronicles, being the parts, which were built upon the level of the Floor of the House, & 6 Cubits higher than ỹ Court of the Priests. A *the East Side.* B *ỹ South Side.* C *the North Side.* D *the West Side.* E *ỹ Battlements round about the Edifice.*

A

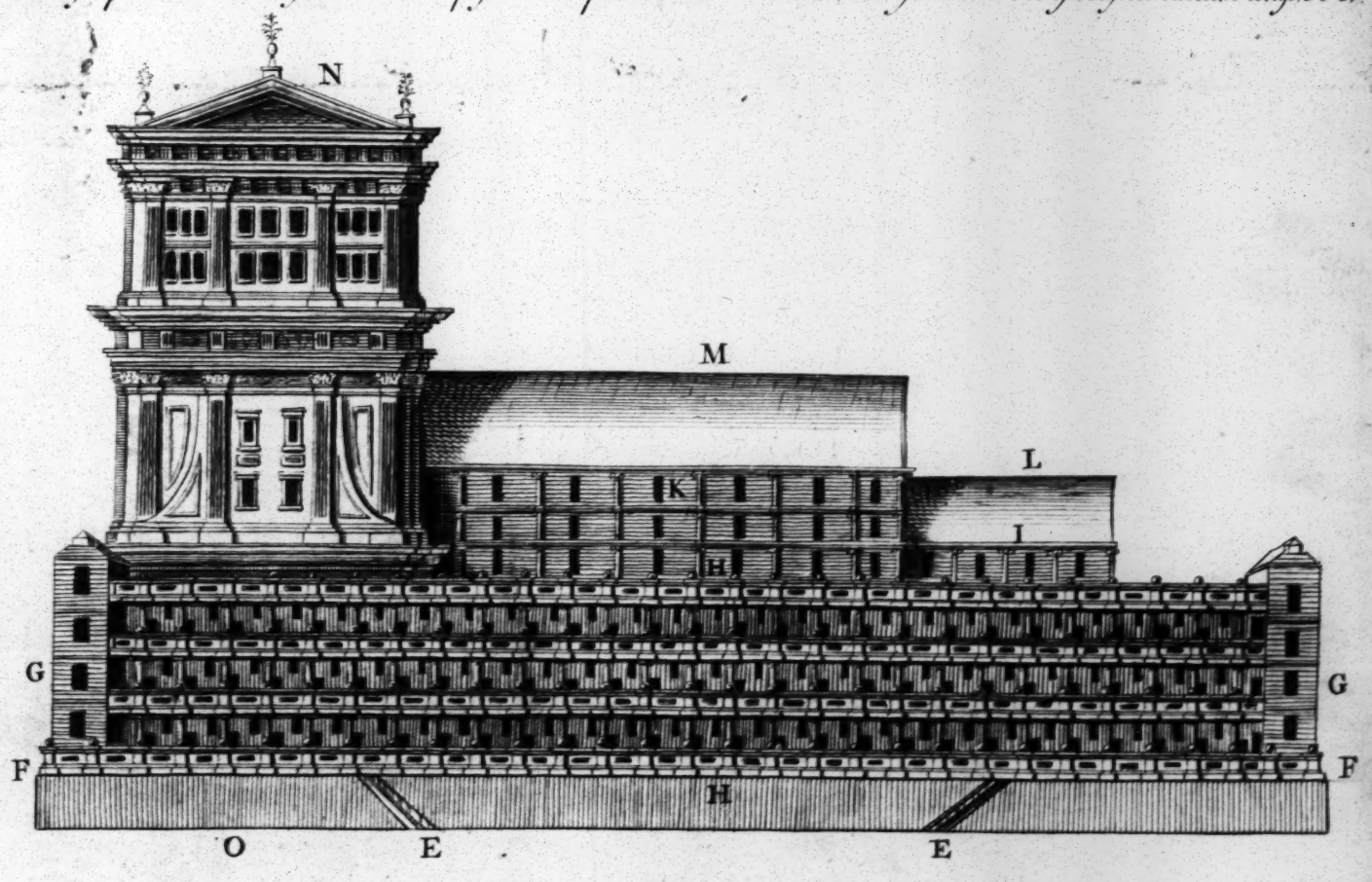
The North side of ỹ Temple. E Stairs to go up from ỹ Court of ỹ Priests to ỹ level of ỹ floor of ỹ Temple. F The level of ỹ floor. G The winding stairs where two of ỹ sides appear one shewing ỹ windows & ỹ other ỹ doors landing upon ỹ galleries. H The Chambers of ỹ Priests in three rows with windows & ỹ door on ỹ right side with pillars opposite to each wall to Support ỹ galleries leading to ỹ doors. I ỹ narrow lights in ỹ Holy of Holies. K The narrow lights in the Body of ỹ Temple in three rows like Solomon's Palace. L. The Couering of ỹ Holy of Holies being in ỹ form of a semicircle M The Covering of ỹ Body of ỹ Temple being of ỹ same form. N The Porch before ỹ Temple being 60 Cubits from ỹ bottom at O & 3. 6 3 but an 120 from ỹ foundation of ỹ whole or ỹ terrace walk 2 Chron 3. 4.

The West end of ỹ Temple. A The length 66 feet. B the ascent from ỹ Court of ỹ Priests to ỹ Temple 6 Cubits high. C Stairs on each side. D Winding stairs at each corner to go up to ỹ Chambers of ỹ Priests 1 Kings 6. 8 In ỹ front there are three windows & in ỹ side toward the Temple three doors. E The Chambers of ỹ Priests with pillars before them opposite ỹ walls to support ỹ battlements leading to each of ỹ three rows ỹ doors being all on ỹ right hand of each chamber. F The back part of ỹ Holy of Holies. G The back part of ỹ Temple. H The porch or Tower 60 Cubits high from I.



A

The Ground Plot of the Temple strictly so call'd, as it is discrib'd in the Book of Kings & Chronicles, being the parts, which were built upon the level of the Floor of the House. & 6 Cubits higher than ỹ Court of the Priests. A the East Side. B ỹ South Side. C the North Side. D the West Side. E. ỹ Battlements round a Cubit thick. F Stairs to go to ỹ Temple from ỹ Court 6 Cubits high. ỹ Steps 14 Cubits long, Exclusive of ỹ Battlements, 12 in all. Extending towards ỹ East 8 Cubits. G Stairs to ascend from ỹ Court of ỹ Priests, to ỹ level of ỹ Temple on the outside. H ỹ Entrance into ỹ Temple 12 Cubits I ỹ Breadth of ỹ Temple. ỹ Porch & ỹ Holy of Holies. 20 Cubits 1 Kings 6. 2 3 2 Chron 3 3 4 KK ỹ Breadth of ỹ whole Building 60 Cubits. Ezra 6. 3. ỹ length including ỹ Stairs on each side being 70 Cubits. & is what is meant by Dr. Prideaux Anno 534 NN ỹ Division of ỹ Temple from ỹ Holy of Holies. 20 Cubits, equal with ỹ Breadth 1 Kings. 6. 20 2 Chron 3 8 PQ ỹ length of ỹ Body of ỹ Temple. 40 Cubits. including ỹ Walls which parted ỹ Holy of Holies from it. 1 Kings 6. 17 OQ the whole length, or 60 Cubits. 1 Kings 6 22 Chron 33 R ỹ winding Stairs, by which they went up to ỹ upper Chambers. 1 Kings. 6. 8. S Pillars to Support ỹ Galleries belonging to ỹ second & third Stories of Chambers. 1 Kings 6. 5 to ỹ 11. T ỹ Chambers of ỹ Priests five Cubits broad. & all ỹ Doors on ỹ Right Hand. 1 Kings 6. 6 8.



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